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## EURAXESS LINKS CHINA

**Dear colleagues,**

Welcome to the March 2014 edition of the **EURAXESS Links China Newsletter**.

The Innovation Convention that was held in Brussels earlier this month brought together key actors from the European and global research & innovation scene. This month's **EU Insight** comes back on this major event and some of its outcomes.

This month we met this month Dr. Heike Strelen, German director of the Sino-German Centre for Research Promotion jointly established and run by the German DFG and the Chinese NSFC. Dr Strelen gave us a long interview sharing her own feelings about working in China and contributing to the development of the Sino-German basic research cooperation.

Regarding EURAXESS activities, the main announcement is the **opening of the registration to the first EURAXESS Share event of the year**. Entitled **“Advancing your Research with EU and Chinese Fellowships: Experience-Sharing Workshop”**, this event will feature many recipients of the European Marie Curie fellowships and various Chinese fellowships for doctoral students, postdocs and more experienced researchers. It should be an excellent occasion to get some precious insights and meet new contacts in a friendly atmosphere. The workshop and a subsequent cocktail will take place in the afternoon on 17 April at the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion in Beijing's Haidian District. **Register now** at <http://euraxess-share-fellowships.splashthat.com/> (click on RVSP).

The **News & Developments** cover joint EU-China activities such as the call for abstracts linked to the International Conference “Urban Futures-Squaring



Circles: Europe, China and the World in 2050" organised under the UrbaChina FP7 project, events and projects carried out in Europe (including the EURAXESS Roadshow launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> of March), bilateral activities between Chinese and EU Member States' funding bodies, as well as the publication of an important Chinese R&I administrative document. Entitled "*Several Opinions of the State Council on Improving and Strengthening the Management of Scientific Research Projects and Funds Financed by the Central Financial Budget*", this document was published by the State Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> of March and set a roadmap for reforms on different aspects of the Chinese R&I system. We sum up some of its key reform orientations on page 23.

The **Grants & Fellowships**, **Jobs**, **Events** and **Press Review** sections feature their usual content and we hope you will find some useful information there.

We wish you a pleasant read,

**Jacques de Soyres**

**Andrea Strelcova**

[EURAXESS Links China](#) Country Representatives

#### About this newsletter

EURAXESS LINKS CHINA NEWSLETTER is a monthly electronic newsletter, edited by EURAXESS Links China, which provides information of specific interest to European researchers and non-European researchers in China who are interested in the European research landscape and in conducting research in Europe or with European partners.

The information contained in this publication is intended for personal use only. It should not be taken in any way to reflect the views of the European Commission nor of the Delegation of the European Union to China.

Please email [china@euraxess.net](mailto:china@euraxess.net) for any comments on this newsletter, contributions you would like to make, or if you think any other colleagues would be interested in receiving this newsletter, or if you wish to unsubscribe.

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# 1 EU Insight – The Innovation Scoreboard 2014 and the Innovation Convention

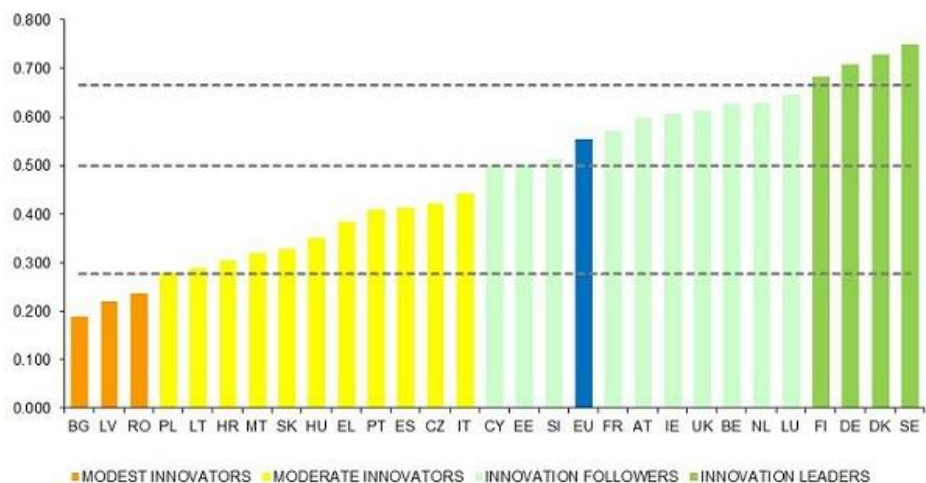
The Innovation Scoreboard 2014 released in early March 2014 and the Innovation Convention held back-to-back on March 10 and 11 of March show the great importance and big role of innovation for Europe.

## ***The Innovation Scoreboard 2014***

The annual Innovation Union Scoreboard published by the European Commission found that Europe is improving its innovation performance. The differences between the member states are becoming smaller again, although at a modest rate. The impact of the economic crisis is not as severe as expected.

The measurement framework used in the Innovation Union Scoreboard distinguishes between 3 main types of indicators (Enablers, Firm activities and Output) and 8 innovation dimensions, capturing in total 25 different indicators.

The Enablers capture the main drivers of innovation performance external to the firm and cover 3 innovation dimensions: Human resources, Open, excellent and attractive research systems as well as Finance and support. Firm activities capture the innovation efforts at the level of the firm, grouped in 3 innovation dimensions: Firm investments, Linkages & entrepreneurship and Intellectual assets. Outputs cover the effects of firms' innovation activities in 2 innovation dimensions: Innovators and Economic effects.





#### Figure 1: EU Member States' innovation performance [6]

When looking at the performance of innovation systems in a global context, South Korea, the US and Japan have a performance lead over the EU. The United States and South Korea outperform the EU both by 17% and Japan by 13%. While the gap with the US and Japan is decreasing, it widens with South Korea.

The top innovation leaders US, Japan and South Korea are particularly dominating the EU in indicators capturing business activity as measured by R&D expenditures in the business sector, Public-private co-publications and PCT patents but also in educational attainment as measured by the Share of population having completed tertiary education.

The EU is still ahead of its other international partners in terms of innovation performance, with China catching up.

#### ***The Innovation Convention 10-11 March 2014***

The second edition of the Innovation Convention took place on 10 and 11 March 2014 in Brussels, with an audience ranging from high-level policy-makers to top researchers, business leaders and the general public. The Innovation Convention is organized by the European Commission's Directorate-General Research and Innovation. The first edition took place in December 2011.

It provides a platform to debate policies that will contribute towards the building of a research and innovation eco-system in Europe.

At the opening of the Innovation Convention, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, stressed the importance of innovation for the future of Europe:

Various event formats with real live stories and real examples of innovation provided various starting points for fruitful discussion between different actors at the conference.

The Capital of Innovation Award and the Women Innovators Prize were two of the prizes awarded at the Convention illustrating two of the barriers to address in Europe, the need for sustainable cities and the need for gender balance, respectively.

#### ***Women Innovators prize 2014***

The competition celebrates women who have combined their scientific excellence with a head for business to set up innovative enterprises. It is open for women who have benefited from EU research and innovation programmes.

Although the proportion of female researchers in Europe is increasing, the under-representation of women in scientific disciplines and careers still persists.

Women represent only 33% of European researchers, 30% of full professors and 15.5% of heads of institutions in the HE sector. Similar, on average, women make up 30% of the entrepreneurs in the EU, but often face greater difficulties than men in starting up businesses and in accessing finance and training.

First prize winner Saskia Biskup is co-founder of the CeGaT GmbH for the development of biomarkers. For more information on second and third prize winners Laura van 't Veer and Ana Maiques please visit [this website](http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess).



***Barcelona becomes “iCapital” of Europe***

With the Capital of Innovation Award, the Commission is recognizing those cities which are making major efforts to promote innovation and improving the quality of their citizens' lives.

Barcelona was awarded the “iCapital” of Europe. It was chosen by a panel of independent experts in a close competition with Grenoble (France) and Groningen (The Netherlands). The €500,000 iCapital prize will be used to scale up and expand Barcelona's efforts on innovation.

The new technologies introduced in Barcelona to foster economic growth and the welfare of its citizens as a part of the “Barcelona as a people city” project of 2011 include:

- open data initiatives
- sustainable city growth initiatives on smart lighting, mobility and residual energy
- social innovation
- promotion of alliances between research centres, universities, private and public partners within the scope of the project
- providing better ‘smart services’ in a flexible, continuous and agile way through ICT

**Sources:**

- [1] [Innovation Union Scoreboard](#)
- [2] [Speech by President Barroso at the Second Innovation Convention](#)
- [3] [Woman innovators prize](#)
- [4] [Barcelona is “iCapital” of Europe](#)
- [5] [Innovation Convention Programme](#)
- [6] [Press Programme Innovation Convention](#)

## 2 Feature

**“Meet the Researcher”: Dr Heike Strelen, German director of the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion (SGC)**



*This month, we meet Dr Heike Strelen, German director of the Sino-German Centre for Research Promotion for the past three and a half years, a few days before her departure from China, and ask her to take a look back on her time here and the achievements of the Sino-German Centre.*

**Dear Heike, could you tell us how you got to the SGC in the first place?**

I've been in China since October 2010 but I've been working at the DFG for many years. Before coming to China, I used to be a programme director for agricultural sciences at the DFG. This is a normal procedure for all positions at the DFG; we are all coming directly from basic research. I've gathered a lot of experience in managing basic research projects and international activities as well. I was one of the heads of Division of Life Sciences, especially the more practically oriented disciplines. I have experience in managing project groups in nutrition research and I also partially managed the Excellence Initiative, a large programme that promotes cutting-edge research and supports the best scientists in Germany.

**And how did you get to China?**

I had some experience in Asia before as a coordinator of projects and collaborative research programmes especially in Thailand and Vietnam. But honestly, China was not really on my radar. At some point, my colleagues from the DFG suggested me to have a look in the China direction. At first, I was sceptical. But then in 2009 I became involved in a joint initiative in nutrition research together with scientists supported through the Sino-German Center. So, my first stay in China was already directly linked to my future workplace. Afterwards, I kept coming back. Finally, when the head of DFG asked me if I would be interested in the position of the German director, I said “OK, I'll try!” And now, I have been here for over three years.

**Dr Heike Strelen** was trained as an agricultural scientist at the University of Leipzig, specialising in animal production. She joined the German Research Foundation (DFG) in 1988 as the programme director for agricultural sciences. However, her interests have always ranged beyond this field. For instance, she coordinated a research group on nutrition and focused also on food safety. She was the head of the Division of Life Sciences at the DFG headquarters in Bonn and in 2005 assumed further responsibility as deputy head of the Department of Scientific Affairs at the Central Department of the DFG. Dr Strelen has served as the German director of the Sino-German Center (SGC) in Beijing since October 2010. She is now leaving China after three and a half years and goes back to the DFG headquarter.



**The SGC significantly contributes to the development of scientific cooperation between Germany and China. What are the key parts of your job and what's your motivation?**

My job in Bonn and here in China is the same; I manage applications and funding decisions. I also manage the SGC team. We have 17 permanent members of staff, a real mixture of positions. Some colleagues are from the NSFC, some from the DFG, and there is also staff locally hired directly for the SGC, from Chinese as well as German side. My idea and motivation was, to have optimal instruments to support German and Chinese scientists and to get enough money for the SGC. During my time, we harvested the fruits of the work of symposia, which is our main instrument. We also provide a lot of support to excellent young scientists, for example during our Lindau Programme through which we bring excellent scientists to Germany to meet Nobel Prize winners.

Although managing research projects is a key part of my job, communication is also very important. We have a lot of visitors, guests, meetings; we make a lot of business trips, too, and make contact with other funding organisations, as well as with the EU and other German colleagues. So, a crucial part of my job is to communicate with other organisations, managers from funding organisations, authorities, researchers. All the information on our activities is online; so far our website exists in two language versions, German and Chinese. We are going to have an English version, too, as we finance not only German and Chinese scientists and the information is interesting for a worldwide audience.

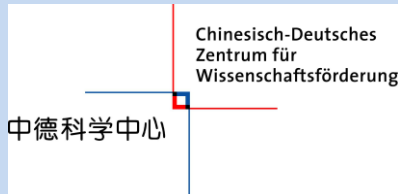
**Do you often finance foreign researchers?**

In nearly every symposium there are foreign researchers from third countries, from all over the world. For research projects applications, the possibility exists to include teams from third countries too. Foreign scientists that are based in a German or a Chinese institution can also apply, for example a lot of researchers in Germany are foreign citizens. As for the symposia, we finance third party countries participation although the scientists must be high-ranked in a specific research field.

**What ideas were behind the joint DFG-NSFC project?**

The start of the SGC dates back to 1998, and the first projects started in 2000. The most important idea behind it was to establish joint cooperation with Chinese and German scientists in basic research. The DFG and the NSFC as our parent organisations are the largest funding organisations in basic research, and the missions of both are quite similar.

Overall, the SGC was a great thing for the DFG as this was the first foreign office worldwide. Now we have quite a few other offices in Washington and New York, Tokyo, New Delhi, Moscow and São Paulo. But the one in Beijing was the first, and it is the only one organized as a joint venture. The other offices are "only DFG" offices. But since the managing system of both DFG and



**The Sino-German Center for Research Promotion (SGC)** is

a research funding institution established as a joint venture of the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC). The Beijing-based Center opened in 2000 and is now a hub of Sino-German collaborative research exchange.

The objective of the SGC is to promote scientific cooperation between Germany and China in the fields of natural and life sciences, but also management and engineering sciences. To achieve this, the SGC is engaged in a comprehensive set of activities designed to help researchers across Germany and China.

The SGC manages various research programmes, funding instruments, and academic exchanges and joint calls. It organizes workshops, symposia and other events in its facilities located within the NSFC premises in Haidian District. The SGC also greatly supports young scientists.



NSFC is very similar, I think the joint venture system is a natural bond. We have a peer-review system, and the most important task is to find the best scientists in basic research. Any scientist can apply anytime for our activities, this resembles our DFG system. In NSFC, this is a bit different. Last year they received nearly 170,000 applications. Now the NSFC is trying to reduce the amount of the applications and to increase the quality by restricting applicants who got rejected in the last two years.

Well, here, the amount of applications is quite different.

### **And where is the SGC standing now compared to the original idea?**

Since the beginning the SGC is a "one-stop shop" offering multiple services to scientists, funding organisations, authorities and the public under one roof. We have various funding instruments for each stage of cooperation. In fact, until 2009 the SGC actually had more money than we could spend. But now, the situation has changed, and we can only finance a smaller scale of the overall applications. We have a lot of high-quality projects, and the competition is quite high. When the Center started, it followed the top-down principle. Now in most cases, it is implementing the bottom-up principle, and sometimes there is a mixture of both.

### **You are leaving the SGC after more than three years in the position. How has the "joint venture" structure worked in practice for you?**

Two weeks ago I had a final meeting at the NSFC, and I recognize how much I have learned. At the beginning of my time in China, my nerves were sometimes close to a breakdown, but at the end all worked out fine. We have a parallel structure of a German director and a Chinese director, so at the directors' meeting we always find a joint solution. Sometimes this is not so easy, but as we are a joint venture, we must always find one; otherwise no decision can go ahead. It helps a lot that I have very competent colleagues on the Chinese side, and the Chinese director Prof. Chang Qing has also broad international experience from India. The collaboration works really well, and the atmosphere in the Center is really nice. In my office and on this floor of the building, the vibes are always positive and friendly.

However, it is a Chinese working environment after all. It does not resemble a solely foreign company or an embassy. Compared to Germany and a single German organisation, in China the working environment is much more unfamiliar. That is why it is important to have a lot of support from the parent organisation. I have a German telephone line here directly to the DFG, with another Chinese line next to it. Plus two computers and three cell phones for Germany and China, sometimes I feel kind of split.

### **What is the total budget of the Sino-German Center?**

The total budget is 5 million EUR per year at the moment. Each side contributes 50%. The DFG cannot increase the budget quicker than 5% a year, although in



fact, the NSFC would like to give us more every year. Which is a complete change - the situation used to be the other way around. So the conditions are changing at this point, and I hope that in the future we can get more money. We have a clear work distribution; neither of the parent organisations wants to have a small DFG or the NSFC in the neighbourhood. We establish funding collaboration, and we prepare the basis for joint calls.

**Going back to your personal experience, how do you compare the two research environments in Germany and in China?**

The most important thing to realize is that we support basic research. And basic research is really international. So in my point of view, there are no differences between China and Germany, the system works in a similar way. This is the reason why it is much easier to have cooperation in basic research, as it is quite different from industries, politics or other fields. And this is an advantage for us.

**So you don't see any differences between the two? Is there anything where the two entities could learn from each other?**

Of course, the mentality of people can be quite different! However, this can be an advantage. Such cultural differences can complement each other. The Germans are very accurate and precise people, while the Chinese can be more flexible. Often, when we organize symposia here in China, there is no exact programme until the last minute! At first, this made me completely astonished; it was a truly new perspective of doing things for me. But then I realized it is a good system, because you can more easily include all the difficulties occurring on the way.

I took part in a lot of symposia, and none of them happened to be chaotic or badly organized! In the end all works out, and everything turns out perfect. But sometimes, especially for some Germans, this might seem chaotic and difficult to digest. After a while I started just thinking: Don't worry, be happy, everything is fine! And in the end, that was always the case. So in fact, China made me change my mentality too, as I realized we Germans are very well structured, but sometimes too much. I learned a lot from this.

**What about your future plans?**

I am going back to the DFG as the deputy head of the Division of Scientific Affairs and head of Division of Life sciences. And then maybe I am going to retire rather soon and follow my husband who has already retired. In any case, I hope I will be back in China soon, hopefully in September, as the Center will also celebrate 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lindau Programme.

**Are you looking forward to being back in Germany? What are you going to miss?**

I like the mentality of Chinese people, I like Chinese culture. We have had a large apartment in the Olympic village, not so far away from the Center. Since I



am an agriculture scientist, I like having a huge, nice garden; I will surely miss mine in Beijing. I'm also going to miss Chinese cuisine, of course. Last but not least, I will greatly miss all my colleagues here. For their sake, I also hope that the air pollution is going to get better soon.

However, I am very happy that I will be able to spend more time with my whole family; we have two sons and a daughter. I'm also glad I will be more in touch with my friends. These are simply essential points. I am also happy to go back to my home office, although at the same time, I am worried that life back in Europe might be slightly boring. The first weeks and months might indeed be different and not so exciting, but who knows? I think fifty percent of me will be happy, fifty percent not so much. It really is not so clear-cut for me.

### **And where do you see the SGC going?**

The Sino-German Center will not change but we will be flexible regarding the demands and wishes of researchers in China and Germany. We have one application, one review procedure, one decision making procedure, and at the end we have a common pot of money. This is a great advantage of the joint venture. We have a lot of collaboration in Europe, also with other countries. The SGC is a "one-stop shop". This is the idea behind, and our mission. This idea is a really great one; it could perhaps also serve as an inspiration to other funding organizations. We are open to sharing our experience with other partners who should feel free to contact us! We are truly open to give out what we know to others worldwide.

### **Dear Heike, thank you very much for your time!**

*The next EURAXESS Share – ["Advancing your Research through EU and Chinese Fellowships: Experience-sharing Workshop"](#) - is going to take place in the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion on April 17<sup>th</sup>.*





### 3 EURAXESS Links Activities



**EURAXESS Links China on Social Media:** Join our network on **Facebook, WeChat or LinkedIn**

You can now follow EURAXESS Links China on various social media according to your location or preference.

Don't miss any of the latest news and daily updates about jobs, fellowships, funding, science policy and other pieces of information, and join our network on social media.

Whether in Europe, China or elsewhere, you can either like us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on WeChat (scan green QR code above). You can also join our [LinkedIn group](#).

EURAXESS Links would like to hear from you how we can further improve our services

Thank you very much for taking 3 minutes to complete our [survey](#).

**REGISTER NOW - EURAXESS Share Event: Advancing your Research with EU and Chinese Fellowships, 17 April, Beijing**



**Researchers of all fields** are welcome to join us for an afternoon workshop, presenting various EU and Chinese fellowships from an informal, practical perspective.

This EURAXESS Share event will take place in the afternoon of Thursday 17 April, at the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion in Haidian district, Beijing (see *programme* [here](#)). It will be followed by a networking cocktail for all participants.

It is aimed at all researchers, **regardless of nationality**, who are looking into possible funding opportunities and want to get practical information as well as learn about others' first-hand experience.

Researchers who went through the process of applying and receiving various fellowships will share their experience with the audience, in order to get the full 'real' story from the applicants' perspective.

Through open discussion among all participants, including senior researchers and recipients of other funding programmes, the afternoon will allow attendees to access relevant and practical information for advancing their research between Europe and China.

The event will also provide a good networking opportunity.

**[Register online now](http://euraxess-share-fellowships.splashthat.com/) at <http://euraxess-share-fellowships.splashthat.com/> (click on RSVP) and feel free to circulate this invitation around you.**

For any inquiries e-mail us at [china@euraxess.net](mailto:china@euraxess.net).



## 4 News & Developments

### 4.1 EU & Multilateral Cooperation



#### CALL FOR ABSTRACTS - International Conference “Urban Futures-Squaring Circles: Europe, China and the World in 2050”

Organized within the framework of the EU-FP7 project 'URBACHINA', the International Conference on "Urban Futures-Squaring Circles: Europe, China and the World in 2050" (10-11 October, 2014, Lisbon, Portugal), aims to bring together scholars and practitioners interested in applying scenarios and foresight approaches to sustainable urban policy and planning. The conference, to be held at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, will address the following two core themes and four thematic threads:

- Core Theme I. Scenarios for Cities of the Future
- Core Theme II. People and Societies in Future Cities
- Thematic thread A: Forward Thinking Methods
- Thematic thread B: Governance in Future Cities
- Thematic thread C: Future of Resources
- Thematic thread D: Future of Urban Systems

The deadline to submit abstracts is **30 April, 2014**.

Please check detailed information here: <http://www.ufsc2050.ics.ul.pt/>

#### EU on the road to help researchers find jobs and advice

The European Commission launched a pan-European information campaign to help researchers find career advice and work through the [EURAXESS](#) gateway. The “EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion” roadshow will visit 29 European cities in 22 countries ([MEMO/14/145](#)) to offer researchers and those interested in scientific careers advice on jobs, CV building and employment rights. The two-month long campaign, with a strong social media presence, is expected to reach out to around 100,000 students and young researchers.

Unveiling the campaign bus in Brussels, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Máire Geoghegan-Quinn said: “*EURAXESS* has





*become the go-to place for researchers seeking jobs in Europe. From finding work to funding opportunities, EURAXESS offers researchers concrete information and advice. With more than 40,000 advertised jobs per year and more than one million mobility-related queries tackled within the last four years, EURAXESS is an essential resource at a time unemployment is our greatest economic challenge."*

EURAXESS is supported by 40 participating countries across Europe. Through its portal, it provides a single access point to information across countries and personalised assistance by more than 530 staff working in over 260 Service Centres.

In 2013, there were nearly 950,000 unique visitors to the EURAXESS website, three times more than in 2010, and nearly 9.6 million page views. More than 7,700 research organisations (companies, universities and SMEs, etc.) are currently registered on EURAXESS Jobs. The aim of the tour is to encourage even wider participation.

For further information:

EURAXESS: [www.euraxess.org](http://www.euraxess.org)

EURAXESS On Tour: [www.facebook.com/EURAXESS.OnTour](https://www.facebook.com/EURAXESS.OnTour)

European Research Area (ERA): [http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.htm)

Source: [European Commission](#)

## **CHOICE project strengthens collaboration between China and Europe on ICT research**

The ICT sector has become a pillar of the Chinese economy. Practically all global ICT industry leaders have now begun to set up R&D centres in China, which has become the third most important offshore R&D location in the world. It is a research and technology leader in various fields, ranging from material sciences, to biotechnology, energy, and information security, and it can be an important partner for Europe in ICT research.

The CHOICE project, funded by DG CONNECT through the FP7 programme, has been established to ensure that this vital EU-China partnership on ICT research is suitably nurtured, and that a bridge is created towards Horizon 2020.

Launched in January just as the Horizon 2020 programme kicked off, CHOICE will provide continuity and progress in supporting and strengthening collaboration between China and Europe on ICT research. Project partners are keen to capitalise on Horizon 2020's shift away from technology-driven towards innovation-driven ICT R&D based on societal needs and consumer aspirations. This shift in focus means that there are many opportunities for the programme to play an important role in helping to meet the increasing Chinese domestic demand.



CHOICE will no doubt build on the work of a previous project in the same area, OPENCHINA-ICT, which also worked to facilitate ICT-related research cooperation between Europe and China. OPENCHINA-ICT succeeded in completing a survey of the European and Chinese ICT research environments, created an 'EU-China ICT research online community' and prepared the 'EU-China ICT Cooperation Plan', among other things.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.euchina-ict.eu>

Read more in source: [Cordis](#)

## EU-US Brain-mapping projects to join forces

US and European research programmes will begin coordinating research.

The European Union's €1-billion (US\$1.3-billion) [Human Brain Project \(HBP\)](#) and the United States' \$1-billion [Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies \(BRAIN\)](#) Initiative will launch collaboration later this year, according to government officials involved in both projects.

The US brain-research programme aims to create tools to image and control brain activity, while its European counterpart hopes to create a working computational model of the organ.

Details about how closely the US and European programmes will coordinate are still to be released, but US government officials say that the effort will include all of the BRAIN Initiative's government partners — the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation and Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Henry Markram, a neuroscientist at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL), who directs the HBP, says that Israel's brain initiative will also be involved.

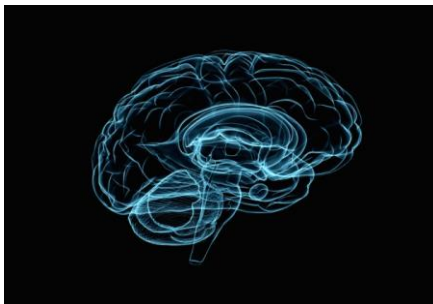
Read the full article on [nature.com](#)

## Women innovators prize 2014: Commission rewards winners from Germany, Netherlands and Spain

The three winners were selected by an independent panel of experts from a total of 67 applications. The contest follows the success of a [pilot edition in 2011](#) and is worth €100,000 for the first prize, €50,000 for the second and €25,000 for the third. (see also [EU Insight article above](#))

Saskia Biskup is CEO of CeGaT in Germany. The award recognises Saskia's outstanding innovation achievements in research into neurodegenerative diseases, as well as her immense success in taking the results through to market.

Read more about the winners' profiles in source: [European Commission](#)



Jesper Hilding Klausen/Alamy



© European Commission



## German company wins EU's first €2 million inducement prize for innovative vaccine technology

German biopharmaceutical company [CureVac GmbH](#) has won the EU's first ever innovation inducement prize. The company received the prize for progress towards a novel technology to bring life-saving vaccines to people across the planet in safe and affordable ways. The European Commission offered the €2 million prize to encourage inventors to overcome one of the biggest barriers to using vaccines in developing countries: the need to keep them stable at any ambient temperature.

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, said: *"CureVac's success opens up the possibility of a real European breakthrough in the delivery of vaccines to areas where they are needed most. This technology could save lives – exactly the type of innovation an EU inducement prize should support."*

CureVac's RActive® vaccine technology is based on messenger RNA (mRNA) molecules that stimulate the immune system. It has the potential to allow the production of vaccines that are protected against both elevated temperature and inadvertent freezing. It would be possible to rapidly produce these vaccines against almost any infectious disease, and deliver these to the most remote areas of the world. CureVac is currently running a number of clinical trials with these vaccines.

This is the first time the Commission has offered a so-called inducement prize to stimulate research and innovation in the European Union. An inducement prize sets an ambitious goal, but it does not say how that goal should be achieved or specifically who should achieve it.

Read more in source: [European Commission](#)

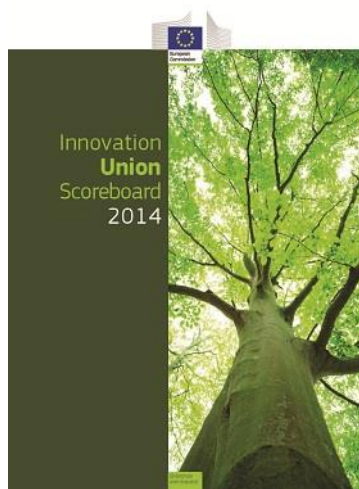
## Event – Developing the next generation of scientists and engineers - 3 June 2014, London

This seminar will look at the challenges in increasing the number of young people who choose Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects and careers.

It follows recent concerns about the lack of STEM graduates taking up careers in these subjects and is also timed to follow the recent publication of the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee inquiry into Women in STEM careers, with just 15.5% of the STEM workforce being made up of women.

Planned sessions will look at ways in which government and the HE sector can encourage more young people to study STEM subjects at all levels of education, as well as ways to improve careers guidance for those who do.

Further details available [here](#).



## Publication – Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014: EU more innovative but the differences between Member States are still high and diminish only slowly

The annual Innovation Union Scoreboard (see also [EU Insight article above](#)) provides a comparative assessment of the research and innovation performance of the EU Member States and the relative strengths and weaknesses of their research and innovation systems.

In addition, the Scoreboard covers Serbia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. On a more limited number of indicators, available internationally, it also covers Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Russia, South Africa, South Korea and the US.

Every two years the Innovation Union Scoreboard is accompanied by a Regional Innovation Scoreboard. The Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2014 provides a comparative assessment of innovation performance across 190 regions of the European Union, Norway and Switzerland using a limited number of research and innovation indicators.

Overall, the EU annual average growth rate of innovation performance reached 1.7% over the analysed eight-year period 2006-2013 with all Member States improving their innovation performance. Portugal, Estonia and Latvia are the innovation growth leaders, i.e. the countries with the highest rate of innovation performance improvement.

Altogether, this year's results show that innovation performance among the Member States is converging but the convergence process slowed down.

[Read more about the scoreboard's content](#) or [access the full document](#).

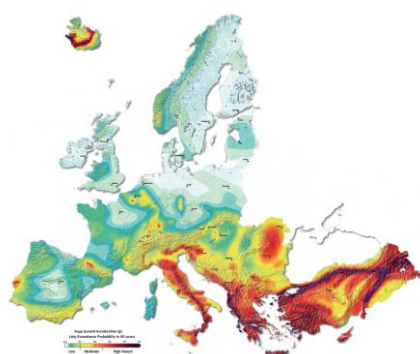
## EU Research Highlight – Mapping Europe's earthquake risk

The Balkan and Mediterranean countries as well as Turkey are all at higher risk of earthquakes than many other Europeans, according to a map produced by EU researchers.

Researchers at the EU-funded SHARE project have produced a map displaying which parts of Europe are most at risk from an earthquake, and it shows that Italy, the Balkans, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey are among the most exposed regions of the continent.

'Europe has a long history of destructive earthquakes,' said Professor Domenico Giardini, coordinator of the SHARE project. 'We all remember the tragic events of Izmit (Turkey) in 1999 and L'Aquila (Italy) in 2009.' In Izmit, a strong earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale killed 17 000 people, while in L'Aquila a moderate 5.9 magnitude quake killed more than 300 people and destroyed much of the city.

To produce the map, researchers from the SHARE project combined data from more than 30 000 European earthquakes with a magnitude larger than or equal



The map produced by the SHARE project. (click on the image to enlarge)



to 3.5 on the Richter scale since the year 1 000, and factored in their damaging effects. To gather data they used data from the [AHEAD interactive map](#) of earthquakes in Europe.

They then cross-referenced this data with over 1 100 active faults in Europe, which have a combined length of 64 000 kilometres.

All the information was combined on a single map (see left) that shows thick purple zones running through the areas of south-east Europe where earthquakes are more likely, and where they can cause the greatest damage to society.

Read more in source: [Horizon](#)

### **EU Research Highlight – Satellite applications for emergency handling, traffic alerts, road safety and incident prevention**

With supporting infrastructure and applications in place, SafeTRIP technology could allow automatic payment of road-user charges (such as road tolls or congestion charges) across Europe or give passengers the ability to look for hotels or restaurants and book them while on the move.

Getting from A to B on European roads could become an easier, safer and more entertaining experience thanks to a new mobile technology platform for vehicles demonstrated by the SafeTRIP project.

Satellite navigation is now a commonplace technology in road vehicles. But the main advantages of satellites – their ability to provide a uniform, reliable and quickly updated service across large geographical areas – provide opportunities for many other services.

The SafeTRIP project demonstrated the possibilities for commercial services based around the S-band communication channel available via the Eutelsat 10A satellite. This channel is optimised for broadcast multimedia content delivery and two-way data communication via small mobile units that are ideal for vehicle applications.

“However, to realise these opportunities requires the demonstration of the concept and the development of a standardised platform, and that is essentially what SafeTRIP has achieved,” says Guy Frémont, coordinator of the project and Director of New Technologies for French autoroute operator Sanef. “We have defined the architecture of the system and also worked through the standardisation issues required to implement the technology.”

This business model – to develop an open standardised architecture for low-cost terminals – is the same as that used for other successful mobile devices, such as satellite navigation and GSM technologies. And the model allows third-party software developers to produce applications for download, initiating a new and valuable market for ‘apps’.

Read more in source: [European Commission](#)



© Vitaly Krivosheev fotolia





© Sophia Winters fotolia

## EU Research Highlight – European researchers improve technology for next-generation biofuels

Ethanol is relatively easy to produce and can be used in existing engines. However, the so-called first-generation technology currently used to produce ethanol is energy-inefficient, offering slim carbon savings over gasoline, and it relies on edible crops such as maize and sugar beet, which some scientists argue could drive up global food prices.

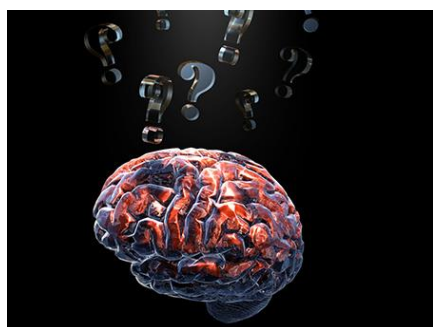
A more promising future source of ethanol is biomass originating from agricultural and forestry wastes. The challenge is that the energy in these sources is much more difficult to extract. Two key hurdles exist. The first is enzymes. Enzymes are used to help break down fibrous plants, but the enzymes currently in use cannot operate at very high temperatures. The second is yeast. The yeast that carries out fermentation for today's biofuels cannot digest some of the sugars produced from fibrous plants, and can be limited by temperature as well.

The European Union (EU)-funded NEMO project took a two-step approach to address both these hurdles to industrial-scale production of cellulosic ethanol and developed new enzymes and yeast strains.

Finally, the modified enzymes and yeast strains were tested in combination for two relevant raw materials for European industry: spruce and Arundo, a type of cane. The industrial partners involved in the NEMO project performed pilot-scale production of ethanol from each of these feedstocks, using enzymes and yeast strains tailored to each.

The increased ethanol yields led to greater plant efficiency and decreased greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, the ethanol produced in this way was calculated to have a lower estimated selling price than that produced using conventional methods. "The results show we have made improvements that are beneficial in terms of sustainability, cost and efficiency," said Project Coordinator Merja Penttilä at the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland.

Read more in source: [European Commission](#)



© markus dehlzeit fotolia

## EU Research Highlight – Tiny technology to tackle Alzheimer's

Despite advances which have made interpretation of the molecular basis of the Alzheimer disease possible, there has been little progress in diagnosis and therapy. The EU-funded NAD project has been working to change that by developing nanoparticles which can be adapted to the specifics of what is known about the causes of this debilitating brain disorder.

Drugs need to be designed to pass biological barriers, such as the gastrointestinal barrier (the stomach and intestines) if taken orally, or the blood-brain barrier in the case of brain disease.

However, getting the larger molecules of drug treatments to cross the biological barriers within the human body is a major challenge. The NAD project has



For more information regarding the European Commission's international research cooperation activities worldwide, read the [European Commission's monthly "International Research Update"](#)

And visit the [European Commission Research & Innovation International Cooperation China webpage](#)

managed to do this by using nanoparticles to reach the area most affected by Alzheimer's.

Attached to these nanoparticles are molecules that can then recognise the insoluble fibrous protein deposits known as amyloids that are characteristic of the disease. The nanoparticles also work to remove the amyloid deposits.

## 4.2 EU Member States\*, China & Bilateral Cooperation

### China – State Council publishes ‘opinions’ on how to to improve the management of research projects

On 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, China's State Council published a document called „Several Opinions of the State Council on Improving and Strengthening the Management of Scientific Research Projects and Funds Financed by the Central Financial Budget“ (《国务院关于改进加强中央财政科研项目 and 资金管理的若干意见》) addressed to provincial governments, State Council ministries and commissions and their affiliated agencies.

This document aims to establish a scientific research project and fund management mechanism that is „clear in responsibilities, scientific in regulation, open and transparent, and strong in supervision“.

Here are some of its key elements:

#### Re-organisation and clarification of the different research funding programmes

- The S&T programmes (including special funds) administered by the relevant ministries shall be optimised and integrated, and those programmes with unclear positioning, duplication and overlapping or ineffective performance, shall be adjusted as appropriate, eliminated, integrated or transformed.
- Major projects should reflect national objectives. For those major research projects related to national strategic demand and long-term development, resources should be pooled to concentrate on significant issues and key breakthroughs.

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\* Including countries associated with the 7th Framework Programme.



### **Enhance communication**

- The mechanism for project guideline formulation and publication shall be reformed. Project administration authorities shall publish project guidelines at a fixed time on a yearly basis and widely disseminate the information via different means.
- The period between the date of publication and the deadline for project submission shall in principle not be less than 50 days.
- The S&T authority and finance authority, in collaboration with relevant ministries and localities, shall set up the database of science projects funded by the central budget by the end of 2014; by the end of 2015, the database shall be connected and accessible with the regional databases, so that a comprehensive national S&T management information system can be established and open to access for the general public.

### **Promote peer-review as the main evaluation system**

- Project administration authorities shall optimise fair and competitive selection mechanism, and decide project undertakers through open selection based on merits.
- Project evaluation and review should mainly adopt peer review. Overseas high-level experts shall be invited to participate. The proportion of front-line scientists among evaluation experts should reach around 75%.
- Experts' opinions should be fully respected. Research tasks and project undertakers should be determined by peer reviews based on open and competitive selection.

### **Strengthen the researchers' position**

- The support to young researchers shall be reinforced and an environment "encouraging exploration and tolerating failure" should be created.
- Income policy for researchers shall be optimised, and distribution incentive mechanisms should be closely linked with their position responsibilities, work performance, and practical contributions.
- Researchers' mobility mechanism should be strengthened.
- Project packaging and "forced partnering" by administrations should be put to an end.

### **Reinforce the role of enterprises and focus on innovation**

- Enterprises should be the main player in the market-oriented projects. The boundaries between government and market should be clarified.
- The proportion of experts from enterprises in evaluation for market-oriented projects shall be increased.
- Basic and frontier research projects should be targeted at original innovation.
- Research institutes and universities are encouraged in talents' exchanges with enterprises.

Access the full original document on the [PRC central government website](http://www.gov.cn/jw/2014/03/27/content_2722222.htm).





### **Chinese Academy of Sciences Tops 2013 Asia-Pacific NPI**

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) has taken the top spot in the 2013 Nature Publishing Index (NPI) for the Asia-Pacific area, according to the NPI 2013 Asia-Pacific published as a supplement to Nature. The academy topped the region in each of NPI's four subject areas, namely, Chemistry, Earth & Environmental Sciences, Life Sciences and Physical Sciences, according to the index. Two CAS institutes made the greatest contribution to the NPI output of the academy. The two institutes are the Institute of Physics (17%) and the Shanghai Institute of Biological Sciences (13%). The NPI 2013 Asia-Pacific supplement is available online at <http://www.natureasia.com/en/publishing-index/asia-pacific/supplement2013>.

Source: [CAS](#)

### **China – 67 recommended young researchers for this year's first application round of the NSFC International Young Scientists Fellowship**

The list of recommended applicants is available on the [NSFC website](#). It features 36 Europeans. The recommended researchers now have until 4th of April to submit their full applications to NSFC.

### **China/France – NSFC announces Sino-French projects jointly selected with French CNRS**

Scientific Cooperation International Projects (PICS) are projects established and presented jointly by two research teams, one belonging to CNRS and one non-French one, **in all fields**. These are three years projects aiming to strengthen collaboration between two partners which has already resulted in one or several co-publications. Funding is provided to the CNRS-affiliated team to organize missions, seminars and working meetings with its partner. With some foreign funding agencies, CNRS has signed agreements that foresee funding provided to the partner of the CNRS research team by the foreign funding organisation.

This is the case in China where CNRS has an agreement with NSFC. Applications were submitted separately, the CNRS team to CNRS, and the Chinese team to NSFC, in April (pre-proposals) and June 2013 (full proposals).

NSFC and CNRS selected 5 joint projects out of 8 eligible proposals. The list of the selected projects can be found on the [NSFC website](#).

### **China/UK – NSFC-RS International Exchange Scheme 2014 results**

According to the agreement between the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the British Royal Society (RS), this scheme is for



scientists in the UK and China who want to stimulate new collaborations with leading scientists overseas through either a one-off visit or bilateral travel.

This entails the UK applicant submitting a proposal to the Royal Society for up to £12,000 and the Chinese applicant simultaneously submitting a proposal for an additional amount up to/equivalent to £12,000 to the NSFC.

The NSFC and the RS selected 33 out of 186 eligible proposals received by last 30 October, 2013, for joint funding over the April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2016 period.

The list of selected projects can be found on the [NSFC website](#).

### **China/UK – 27 eligible proposals for joint NSFC-EPSRC 2014 call on ‘Sustainable Materials for Infrastructure’**

The NSFC and the EPSRC Engineering Theme published the call last December to develop collaborative projects between researchers from the UK and in the area of ‘Sustainable Materials for Infrastructure’ under the following themes:

- Multi-functional materials
- Energy efficient buildings
- Novel concrete technologies
- Materials 5R; Reduce, Recover, Reuse, Recycle and Retain.

Collaborative proposals should consider how their proposal makes the best use of available expertise in the UK and China, how it networks the UK and Chinese community and how it positions these activities against other international opportunities.

Up to £3M is available across the theme areas from the EPSRC Engineering Theme with matched equivalent resources from NSFC (up to 2M RMB per project). It is expected that up to 6 proposals will be funded.

Out of 34 proposals submitted by the call deadline on 19 February 2014, 27 were deemed eligible. The list of these 27 pre-selected projects can be found on the [NSFC website](#). The projects selected for funding should be known by June 2014.

### **Denmark – MoU Signed on Economic and Technical Cooperation on Pig Production**

The Rongchang People's Government and the Royal Danish Embassy signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Chongqing the 27th of February regarding Economic and Technical Cooperation on Pig Production.

The MoU was signed at the Royal Danish Consulate General in Chongqing.

The intention of the MoU is to enhance cooperation between Rongchang and Denmark within areas such as pig breeding, farm management, slurry



management, meat processing, education and training, animal welfare and food safety.

Pig production is an area where Danish companies have been leading for many years.

Rongchang brands itself as the Animal Husbandry Science and Technology City of China. Rongchang is quickly becoming one of China's largest cultivation and export bases of piglets. The area annually produces 135,000 sow herds, 908,600 slaughtered pigs and 2 million piglets.

Further details in source: [Denmark in China](#)



## PhD in France

### France – Find your PhD with the new website "PhD in France"

The Embassy of France in India and CampusFrance India are pleased to announce the launch of the website [www.phdinfrance.net](http://www.phdinfrance.net). This website presents French PhD offers on one platform and is open to all foreign students (not only Indians).

France is the third most popular country in the world among foreign students: each year out of the 10,000 students getting their PhD certificates in France, 40% are foreigners.

The PhD positions are scattered among the various laboratories and it is difficult to find them. This site aggregates the offers of the laboratories and universities in France. It helps in making research simple for all foreign and English-speaking students wishing to pursue a PhD in France.

For the majority of the scientific doctorates, the student gets a 3-year employment contract for a gross amount of approximately € 1,700 / month (1300 € net). In most laboratories, English is understood, the thesis may also be written in English. However, for the subjects of social sciences and law, a certain level (B2 level) of French may be required.

Chinese students seeking to do a thesis are also invited to sign up on [www.phdinfrance.net](http://www.phdinfrance.net) where they can automatically find the offers posted and remain updated of the new offers as and when they are published on the site.

Source: [The Scientific Department of the French Embassy in India](#)

### France – List of public-private joint Sino-French Laboratories published

The S&T service of the French Embassy to China has released a guidebook introducing eight public-private joint Sino-French research structures involving French companies and Chinese academic and public research institutions. These structures can be partially or entirely funded by the French company and cover a variety of fields.

Learn more and access the list on the [French Embassy website](#).



### France – New website of Sino-French joint laboratory

In 2011, the CNRS, the Ecole normale supérieure de Lyon, the East China Normal University and the chemical company Solvay (ex-Rhodia), soon after joined by the Lille 1 and Fudan universities, jointly established in Shanghai an international laboratory called “Eco-Efficiency Products and Process” (E2P2).

For the past three years this joint laboratory has carried out Sino-French projects in the fields of renewable raw-materials-based materials production and processes.

E2P2 has now a new website explaining how the research in this field is progressing and supporting the goal of sustainable development.

Further details in source: [La France en Chine](#)

### France – Science Café on Alzheimer disease, Guangzhou, 29 March 2014

The French general consulate in Guangzhou is organizing a Science Café next Saturday 29 March, from 10 am to 12 am, at the Guangzhou library, featuring Prof. Bernard Meunier talking about “Alzheimer disease: Why is research on drugs making so slow progress?”.

The conference will be held in French with Chinese translation.

Prof. Bernard Meunier is a world-reknown chemist, former president of the CNRS, and has received numerous national and international awards for his work. His current research work relates to the development of therapeutic agents for diseases such as Alzheimer and malaria.

Further details in source: [La France en Chine](#)

### Sweden – Sino-Swedish Beijing Air Pollution Control Workshop

Sweden is well-known by Chinese stakeholders to be in the forefront of environmental protection and innovative solutions. Sweden has been invited by the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection in presenting solutions to combat air pollution.

On March 18-20, the Center for Environmental Technology (CENTEC) at the Embassy of Sweden in Beijing, together with the Government Offices of Sweden, the Consulate General of Sweden in Shanghai and Business Sweden hosted a delegation to Beijing and Shanghai.

The purpose was to discuss solutions and capture business opportunities arising from the severe air pollution concerns in China.

Further details in source: [Sweden Abroad](#)

On the same topic, [read Business Sweden's Björn Lundberg interview](#), introducing the concept of the workshop.



CSR-Roundtable discussions – Photo:  
Liu Zhen

## Sweden – Sino-African CSR in focus for Roundtable Discussion

Corporate responsibility and localization practices of Chinese contractors in Africa were discussed at a roundtable in Beijing last February 25th.

The roundtable was organised by China International Contractors Association (CHINCA) and the Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of the Embassy of Sweden.

While knowledge and technology transfer in many cases contribute to the improvement of infrastructure and increased standard of living, companies are at different stages in their development of CSR strategies. Comments made at the roundtable suggested that the most successful contractors have in-depth understanding of local culture and regulations. They employ local staff and procure local goods.

In the future, there should be more focus on training of local staff, peer-to-peer CSR learning between multinational companies, community engagement and communication with stakeholders such as media and NGOs.

Africa is an important region for China. Between 2001 and 2012, the value of newly-signed contracts of Chinese international contractors in Africa rose from USD 2.46 billion to USD 64 billion.

To read CHINCA's study report "Localisation practices of Chinese International Contractors in Africa", please refer to [CHINCA's website \(in Chinese\)](#).

Further details in source: [Sweden Abroad](#)

## Sweden – H&M wins Sustainability Innovation Award

Swedish Fashion brand H&M won a Sustainability Innovations Award for its initiative "Don't let fashion go to waste" at the Deloitte China Sustainability Awards held end of February in Shanghai, an award supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The Awards were held in conjunction to a sustainability seminar in Shanghai.

During the day there were discussions about the challenges and opportunities of working with sustainability in China, the importance of sustainability and water challenges in China and globally.

The awards aimed to encourage and reward best practices in sustainability among multinationals in China and showcase the essence of such practices for a more sustainable future in China.

Further details in source: [Sweden Abroad](#)



## UK – UK and China agree £20 million Low Carbon Innovation programme

A new £20 million three-year programme that will support research to develop new low carbon manufacturing processes and technologies, low carbon cities and offshore renewables in the UK and China was agreed on Wednesday 5th March 2014.

Representatives from the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), as part of the Research Councils UK (RCUK) Energy Programme, signed a new memorandum of understanding (MoU) at a meeting in London which was witnessed by the UK's Minister of State for Climate Change, Greg Barker.

Under the MoU the UK and China will each commit £10 million of matched resources over the next three years and there will be approximately £6.6 million available each year. The agreement is the latest collaboration in a series of joint research programmes stretching over the last five years between NSFC and RCUK.

Source: [GOV.UK](http://gov.uk)



## 5 Grants & Fellowships

### 5.1 Calls announcements for international researchers

#### **Belgium – BELSPO Postdoc fellowships to non-EU researchers - SELECTION 2014**

The stimulation of international mobility and the attraction of researchers from abroad is one of the priorities of the European Research Area.

In this context and intending to stimulate the S&T cooperation, the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO) does implement a fellowship scheme for highly qualified non EU researchers (i.e. postdoctoral level or equivalent experience), granting them an opportunity to work **during 6 to 18 months** in a Belgian research team.

The call for proposals 2014 is open. The deadline for application is **30 April, 2014**.

The target countries are those countries with which Belgian Research Institutions wish to strengthen cooperation and for which not sufficient alternatives are available. However, the following are not considered: EU Member States and neither countries associated to the 7th Framework Programme or H2020, nor the USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

The potential Belgian host units are those which are involved in the research programs and actions of BELSPO (cf. FEDRA) or belong to a federal scientific institution.

Further details available on the [BELSPO website](#).

#### **EU – Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships (IF) call is now open**

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) are part of the European research & innovation funding programme '[Horizon 2020](#)'.

The objective of the [MSCA](#) is to support the career development and training of researchers.

Among the different MSCA, the Individual Fellowships support the international mobility of **researchers from all fields** within and beyond Europe.

These fellowships are open to European and Chinese researchers, based in Europe or in China, who, at the time of the relevant deadline for submission of





proposals (see below), are in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience.

The grant usually covers two years' salary, a mobility allowance, research costs and overheads for the host institution. Individual researchers submit proposals for funding in liaison with their planned host organisation. Proposals are judged on their research quality, the researcher's future career prospects, and the support offered by the host organisation.

In details:

Fellowships are either European Fellowships or Global Fellowships:

- [European Fellowships](#) are held in Europe (i.e. EU Member States and Countries Associated to Horizon 2020) and are open to researchers currently within or outside Europe.

- [Global Fellowships](#) are based on a secondment to a non-EU or associated country (as defined above) and a mandatory 12 months return period to a European host.

Application deadline is **11 September, 2014**. Access the online call and get all details on the [Horizon 2020 Participant portal](#).



## EU – 4 Travel Grants for Chinese researchers to attend ESOF2014

The [Euroscience Open Forum \(ESOF\)](#) will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 21-26 June 2014.

The Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation (DASTI) and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS, France) in collaboration with Euroscience have opened two calls for PhD candidates wishing to receive a travel grant to attend ESOF2014.

The 1st call concerns **Europe-Based PhD Candidates** meeting the following criteria:

- PhD candidates
- Under the age 35
- Proficient in English
- Open to all nationalities, however, the PhD candidate needs to work in a European country.

The 2nd Call concerns **PhD Candidates based outside Europe** meeting the following criteria:

- PhD candidates
- Under the age of 35
- Nationals from South Korea (4), **China (4)**, India (5), Brazil (3) and USA (3)\* who at the present time work and live there.
- Proficient in English





- Strong preferences will be given to PhD candidates from universities in the top of the [QS ranking](#).

The application deadline for travel grants is **Tuesday 22 April, 2014**.

Find out more about this call and how to apply on the [Euroscience website](#).

#### **About ESOF:**

[ESOF - Euroscience Open Forum](#) - is the biennial pan-European meeting dedicated to scientific research and innovation. The ESOF2014 event to be held in Copenhagen, 21-26 June 2014 will bring together over 5,000 scientists; business leaders; senior EU and government officials; and international scientific media to discuss the best of European science and to address all of the current major global scientific challenges, including Energy, Climate Change and Health. Themes include "Material and Virtual World", "Science, Democracy & Citizenship" to "The Global Resource Management".

### **Germany – Sino-German Joint Funding Programme „Biomedical and Translational Medicine Studies Based on Stem Cells/Reprogrammed Cells”**

The National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) announce a joint funding programme with the topic **“Biomedical and Translational Medicine Studies Based on Stem Cells/Reprogrammed Cells”**.

The joint call creates a forum of Sino-German collaborative projects to address basic mechanisms and translational aspects of embryonic and adult stem cells.

Tandem projects of one or two applicants from each of the two countries are encouraged to apply.

Joint proposals must be submitted to NSFC and DFG (in English) by **9 May 2014** with the keyword “Stem Cell Biology – Joint Sino-German Call”. Chinese scientists apply for funding in accordance with NSFC’s rules and German scientists in accordance with DFG’s rules, basically following DFG’s guidelines for proposals.

Eligibility requirements for German applicants correspond to those of DFG’s Priority Programmes allowing proposals from researchers from all disciplines who work at research institutions in Germany (not including those institutes which only pursue commercial purposes).

Further details about this call can be found on the [DFG website](#) and on the [NSFC website](#).

### **Germany – Freie Universität Berlin: Calls for application (professorships, junior professorships and Ph.D sholarships)**

**Professorships and junior professorships:**



In 2007, with its future development concept International Network University, Freie Universität Berlin succeeded in winning a major government funding award in the German Excellence Initiative. The second phase of this program focuses on the expansion of international and regional networks and the advancement of junior researchers supported by the Career Path Model.

To meet these goals, Freie Universität Berlin is setting up several Dahlem International Network Junior Research Groups (DIN JRG) that will be managed by junior professors and several Dahlem International Network Professorships (DINP).

(The junior professors will be appointed as civil servants for an initial period of three years. Provided that their performance is thereafter evaluated positively, employment may be extended for three more years.)

Freie Universität Berlin invites applications for [7 Junior Professorships and 5 Professorships \(5 years\)](#). Application deadline is **3 April, 2014**.

#### **PhD. scholarships:**

The Collaborative Research Center 765 (SFB 765) "Multivalency as Chemical Organizational and Operational Principle: New Architectures, Functions, and Applications" at the Freie Universität Berlin with the integrated Research Training Group (Graduiertenkolleg) "Multivalency in Chemistry and Biochemistry" funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) offers several doctoral scholarships for interdisciplinary research projects in the fields of **chemistry, biology, materials science, physics and mathematics**.

The scholarships will be awarded for one year; the earliest start is on May 1, 2014. After one year, scholars may apply for funding through their research groups. Doctoral fellows will receive a stipend of € 1.365 per month. An additional material cost allowance of € 103 per month will also be paid.

Applicants should have gained a top place in their graduating classes and hold a master's degree or equivalent in natural science.

Application deadline is **15 April, 2014**.

Further details available on the [FUB website](#).

#### **Ireland – Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Industry Fellowship Programme 2014**

Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) is pleased to launch the Industry Fellowship Programme 2014 to develop and support academic partnerships with industry.

The purpose of the Industry Fellowship Programme is to facilitate exchanges between academia and industry to stimulate excellence through knowledge transfer and training, thereby building critical mass in areas of strategic importance for Ireland and enabling economic and societal challenges to be tackled.



Fellowships can be awarded to academic researchers wishing to spend time in industry worldwide and to individuals from industry anywhere in the world (including Ireland) wishing to spend time in an eligible Irish Research Body.

Fellowships can be for between 1 and 12 months in duration if full time or for up to 24 months if part time. The maximum Industry Fellowship award amount is €120,000 direct costs.

Next application deadline is **10<sup>th</sup> of June, 2014**.

Further details available on the [SFI website](#).

### **Sweden – Kerstin Hesselgren and Olof Palme Visiting Professorships**

Kerstin Hesselgren Chair is to enable outstanding women scholars from abroad to take up a visiting professorship at a Swedish university in the faculties of humanities, social sciences, law and theology.

The Kerstin Hesselgren Chair should be awarded to a foreign prominent internationally-recognized female researcher in the **social sciences or humanities**.

The Olof Palme Chair is for an outstanding scholar from abroad to take up a visiting professorship at a Swedish university.

The Olof Palme Chair should be awarded to an internationally prominent researcher focused on **topics important to the pursuit of peace in a broad context**. Such topics could include research on international policy, peace and conflict, and comparative social institutions. Other areas could include research on fundamental causes of conflict and social developments that in various ways promote peace and human security.

Swedish universities and Higher education institutes (HEI) are welcome to nominate candidates for the visiting professorship.

The application – with the nominated candidate – should be submitted by the department wishing to host the chair.

The stay in Sweden should be at least six months and maximum one year. In certain situations, grants up to the maximum amount can be approved for periods shorter than six months (see below). If there are special motives to do so, the stay may be divided into more than one period.

Application deadline is **5 May, 2014**.

Further details can be found on the [Swedish Research Council website](#).



## Switzerland – Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) Professorship

SNSF professorships address young researchers who intend to pursue an academic career and wish to establish their own team to realise a research project.

An SNSF professorship includes the researcher's salary (assistant professorship level), a research grant, salaries of employees as well as a contribution to infrastructure costs. The funding period is 4 years and may be extended by no more than 2 years.

Eligibility requirements include:

- Doctorate
- Publications in high-profile journals
- At least two to nine years research experience after the doctorate
- Research stay of several years at a research institution that is not identical with the institution where the doctorate was obtained, thereof at least one year abroad
- Degree from a institution of higher education in Switzerland or at least two years' activity at a Swiss higher education institution by the submission deadline

The application deadline is **1<sup>st</sup> of May, 2014**.

Further details can be found on the [SNSF website](#).

## 5.2 Calls still open

*Calls first announced in [previous editions of the newsletter](#)*

### Belgium – Beware Fellowships

BEWARE FELLOWSHIPS Industry - The deadline for submission of applications is **31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**.

BEWARE FELLOWSHIPS Academia - The deadline for submission is **30 April, 2014**.

Further details and submission forms can be found on the [Wallonia Research & Technology website](#).

### EU – Dragon-Star Innovation Award – call for application

Deadline for application is **31<sup>st</sup> March, 2014**.



Find out more about the [eligibility criteria](#) and download the [Innovation Award application form here](#).

More details available on the [Dragon Star project website](#).

### **EU/Switzerland – PLANT FELLOWS**

The fourth call is now open from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014 until **31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**.

Further details are available on this [dedicated website](#).

### **France – Call for applications - CEFC short-term fieldwork grant for doctoral research on contemporary China**

Complete applications must be submitted on or before **31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**.

Click [here](#) for further details.

### **Switzerland – Sino-Swiss Science and Technology Cooperation (SSSTC) 2013–2016 - Joint Research Projects in Translational biomedical research and medical technology**

The call for proposals is open from 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014 to **31<sup>st</sup> March, 2014**.

For more detailed information, please refer to the [SNSF website](#).

### **Netherlands – Rubicon**

Next application deadline is **2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2014**.

Further details on the [NWO website](#).

### **Sweden – Formas annual open call 2014 for mobility starting grants for young researchers**

Application deadline is **2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2014**.

Further details on the [Swedish Research Council Formas website](#)

### **Sweden – Formas annual open call 2014 for research and development project grants (including for young research leaders)**

Application deadline is **2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2014**.

Further details can be found on the [Swedish Research Council Formas website](#) (click [here for young research leaders programme](#)).



### **France – Fernand Braudel – IFER Fellowships Incoming - Call for applications March 2014**

Deadline for submission: **3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2014**

Further details to be found on the [FMSH website](#).

### **China – NSFC Call for Proposals for the First Round of the International Young Scientists Fellowship in 2014**

Recommendation deadline was 28<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2014.

Individual full proposal submission period: from 21<sup>st</sup> March until **4<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**.

Recipients of last year's fellowships will be able to apply for funding extension also between 21<sup>st</sup> March and **4<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**.

Further details can be found on the [NSFC website](#).

### **Sweden – Initiation Grants**

The next assessment date of received applications is **8<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**.

Further details can be found on the [STINT website](#).

### **EU – ERCIM “Alain Bensoussan” Fellowship Programme**

Find out more on the [dedicated website](#). Next application deadline is **30<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**.

### **France – Call for applications for fellowships at the Paris IAS in 2015-2016**

Deadline for applications: **30<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**

Learn more on the [IAS website](#).

### **Israel – Louis Frieberg Center for East Asian Studies (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) Postdoctoral Fellowships 2014-15**

Application deadline is **30<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**.

Further details available [here](#).

### **Belgium – Pegasus Marie Curie Fellowships (short)**

The current call (for Pegasus Short only) will close on **1<sup>st</sup> May, 2014**.

More details on the [FWO website](#).



### **UK – UK-China Stem Cell Partnership Initiative, NSFC-MRC joint call**

The submission deadline is **7<sup>th</sup> May, 2014**.

UK applicants can find more details on the [MRC website](#). Chinese applicants are invited to visit the [NSFC website](#).

### **Belgium – Odysseus programme**

The next application deadline is **15<sup>th</sup> May, 2014**.

Further details are available on the [FWO website](#).

## **5.3 Open calls under FP7**

The following calls are open under the [Cooperation](#) programme

[Joint Technology Initiatives](#) / 2 open calls (Deadlines 3<sup>th</sup> April, 8<sup>th</sup> April respectively)

The following call is open under the [Capacities](#) programme

[Support for the coherent development of research policies](#) / 1 open call (Deadline 15<sup>th</sup> April)

## **5.4 Open calls under Horizon 2020 and Euratom**

Access all open calls on the [Horizon 2020 Participants' portal](#).

### **Excellent Science programme**

22 open calls including:

European Research Council:

[ERC Consolidator Grant](#) – Deadline **20 May, 2014**

[ERC Proof of Concept Grant](#) – Deadline **1 April, 2014**

Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions:

[Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchange \(RISE\)](#) – Deadline **24 April, 2014**



[Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships \(IF\)](#) – Deadline **11 September, 2014**

### **Industrial Leadership**

[36 open calls](#)

### **Societal Challenges**

70 open calls including the following ones particularly encouraging collaboration with China (*however, it should be kept in mind that ALL calls are open to Chinese participation!*):

[SFS-13-2015: Biological contamination of crops and the food chain](#) – Deadline **24 February, 2015**

[LCE-18-2014: Supporting Joint Actions on demonstration and validation of innovative energy solutions](#) – Deadline **7 May, 2014**

[MG-1.8-2015: International cooperation in aeronautics](#) – Deadline **31 March, 2015**

[MG.5.5-2015 Demonstrating and testing innovative solutions for cleaner and better urban transport and mobility](#) – Deadline **27 August, 2015**

[WASTE-2-2014: A systems approach for the reduction, recycling and reuse of food waste](#) – Deadline **8 April, 2014**

[WASTE-7-2015: Ensuring sustainable use of agricultural waste, co-products and by-products](#) – Deadline **16 October, 2014**

[WATER-5a-2014: Strategic cooperation partnerships](#) – Deadline **8 April, 2014**

[INT-01-2014: Enhancing and focusing research and innovation cooperation with the Union's key international partner countries - proposals targeting Russia and China](#) – Deadline **29 April, 2014**

[INT-11-2014/2015: European cultural and science diplomacy: exploiting the potential of culture and science in the EU's external relations](#) – Deadline **1 July, 2015**

[BG-15-2014: European polar research cooperation](#) – Deadline **26 June, 2014**

### **Science with and for society**

8 open calls including the following one including China in its scope:

[ISSI-5-2014: Supporting structural change in research organisations to promote Responsible Research and Innovation](#) – Deadline **2 October, 2014**





[ISSI .5.2015: Supporting structural change in research organisations to promote Responsible Research and Innovation](#) – Deadline **16 September, 2015**

**Euratom**

[2 open calls](#)





## 6 Jobs

*Access thousands of jobs and fellowships announcements in Europe and worldwide on the [EURAXESS Jobs portal](#).*

### **China Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in Geographical Sciences At The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (Ningbo)**

The successful candidate will be expected to contribute to teaching and curriculum development for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the Department of Geographical Sciences and to supervise undergraduate dissertations. The person appointed will also be expected to conduct ongoing original research for publication and play a lead role in collaborative research projects. Preference will be given to candidates with appropriate expertise in applications of GIS to environmental sciences.

Candidates must hold a PhD in a relevant discipline.

Salary will be within the range of £33,562 - 45,053 per annum depending on skills and experience (salary progression beyond this is subject to performance). In addition, an attractive package including accommodation allowance, travel allowance and insurance will be provided for international appointments.

This post is available from 1 September 2014 and will initially be offered on a fixed-term contract with the University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China for a period of up to five years. This contract may be extended on an indefinite basis by mutual agreement.

Application deadline is **21 April, 2014**.

Access the full announcement on [EURAXESS Jobs](#).

### **China – 6 research and teaching positions open at SJTU-ParisTech Elite Institute of Technology (Shanghai)**

SJTU-ParisTech Elite Institute of Technology (SPEIT) was established in 2013 under the strategic alliance of the Paris Tech Group (Ecole Polytechnique, ENSTA ParisTech, Mines ParisTech and Télécom ParisTech) and Shanghai JiaoTong University.



SPEIT is now recruiting three lecturers in **mathematics** and three lecturers in **physics and chemistry** to start in Fall 2014.

Applicants should have obtained a PhD. in mathematics or physics, be fluent in Chinese and English and be able to teach in French.

French-speaking Chinese researchers are particularly encouraged to apply.

Application deadline is **30 April, 2014**.

Read more (in French) about these positions on the [SPEIT website](#).

### **China – Plant Biology Faculty Positions at the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Shanghai)**

Shanghai Center for Plant Stress Biology (PSC), a new research institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, invites applications for Principal Investigator positions in **all areas of plant sciences** (including but are not limited to plant abiotic and biotic stresses, epigenetics, biochemistry and cell biology, systems biology) and biotechnology.

Outstanding candidates of all nationalities (Chinese language skills not required) and at all levels (Assistant, Associate and Full) who conduct cutting-edge research on any important areas of plant biology and related biotechnology will be considered.

PSC PIs will have access to state-of-the-art core facilities in genomics, proteomics, metabolomics, bioinformatics, and live cell imaging, and will be provided with competitive packages including set-up and annual research funds as well as with attractive salaries and benefits.

Candidates must have a PhD degree and exceptional research accomplishments in relevant research fields.

Access the full announcement on [naturejobs](#).



## 7 Events

### 7.1 EURAXESS Links China recommends

#### **Fourth session of the Shanghai Social Studies Colloquium (SSSC), 16 April, 2014, Shanghai**

Social scientists and interested researchers are invited to the fourth session of the Shanghai Social Studies Colloquium (SSSC). The SSSC is a platform for international and Chinese scholars of the various disciplines of the social sciences who are at all stages of their career and based in the city of Shanghai to come together for:

- presenting their research to an interested audience of other scholars and practitioners
- listening to, discussing and giving feedback to other researchers' work
- fruitful exchange of thoughts and feedback
- networking and socializing, also with a view to develop collaborative research projects

The fourth session of the SSSC will take place on Wednesday, 16 April 2014 at 5pm at the Shanghai teaching site of ESSCA School of Management, Wu Song Road 297, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, Hongkou District, 200080 Shanghai (one floor below the 'Alliance Francaise'; in Chinese: 上海市虹口区吴淞路 297 号 4 楼).

You may come as a regular participant to meet other researchers and discuss their work but we are also looking for scholars who wish to present their work in the form of a working paper, a journal article, a book proposal, a book chapter or any other suitable form. The research topics may be related to the broad range of the social sciences.

You are welcome to present research related to China but this is by no means a necessity. Your research may be unpublished or already published work.

Registration is limited. Two to three papers will be selected per session. The places for regular participants (i.e. those who will not present their research) will be allocated on a first-come-first-serve basis.

For anyone who is interested in participating in the SSSC, with or without presenting a paper, please send an email to [Frauke.Austermann@essca.fr](mailto:Frauke.Austermann@essca.fr) until **Wednesday, 9 April 2014**.



## 7.2 Upcoming scientific events in China

Field	Date	Location	Title (click for more details)
Sino-Brazilian cooperation	15-18 April, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">FAPESP-Week China 2014</a>
Plant Biology	21-25 April, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">Genome Assisted Biology of Crops and Model Plant Systems</a>
Genetics	5-9 May, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">Epigenetics, Chromatin &amp; Transcription</a>
Medicine	10-13 May, 2014	Shanghai	<a href="#">Seventh International Conference SUMO, Ubiquitin, UBL Proteins: Implications for Human Diseases</a>
Neuroscience	12-16 May, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">Neural Circuit Basis of Behavior and its Disorders</a>
Space	12-31 May, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">International Workshop - Application of Space Technologies in Management and Conservation of World Heritage Sites</a>
Genomics	15-17 May, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">GWAS 2014: Genome Variation in Precision Medicine</a>
Engineering	17-18 May, 2014	Nanjing	<a href="#">The 2nd International Conference on Materials Engineering (ICMEN2014)</a>
Medicine	19-23 May, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">Liver Metabolism, Diseases and Cancer</a>
Biotechnology	20-23 May, 2014	Shanghai	<a href="#">Biomufacturing Asia 2014</a>
Biotechnology	20-23 May, 2014	Shanghai	<a href="#">Biosimilars Asia 2014</a>
Engineering	22-24 May, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">2014 2nd International Symposium on Engineering and Natural Sciences (ISEANS 2014)</a>
Engineering	22-24 May, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">2014 The 2nd International Congress on Engineering and Information (ICEAI 2014)</a>
Education	22-24 May, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">2014 the 2nd International Conference on Education and Social Sciences (ICEASS 2014)</a>
Cancer research	26-30 May, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">Precision Cancer Biology and Medicine</a>
Life sciences	29-31 May, 2014	Guangzhou	<a href="#">Genomics and Stem Cell Based</a>



			<a href="#">Therapies: Shaping the Future of Personalized Medicine</a>
Microbiology	2-6 June, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">Systems Medicine Approach to Global Infectious Disease</a>
Structural Biology	9-13 June, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">5th CSHA Symposium: Structural Biology - From Atoms to Molecules</a>
Engineering	10-12 June, 2014	Ningbo	<a href="#">Optics Within Life Sciences 2014</a>
Chemical Biology	16-20 June, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">Protein Modification &amp; Homeostasis</a>
Bioinformatics	16-20 June, 2014	Shenzhen	<a href="#">BGI Bioinformatics Workshop on Diseases</a>
Neuroscience	23-27 June, 2014	Suzhou	<a href="#">CSHA / NGF 2014 Joint Conference on Nerve Growth Factor and Related Neurotrophic Factors: Emerging Concepts, New Mechanisms, Novel Technologies</a>
Computer science	19-20 July, 2014	Shanghai	<a href="#">4th International Conference on Computer Engineering and Networks (CENet 2014)</a>
Marine biology	4-9 August, 2014	Shanghai	<a href="#">ClimEco4</a>
Bioinformatics	15-18 September, 2014	Shenzhen	<a href="#">2014 BGI International Bioinformatics Workshop</a>
Engineering	20-21 September, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">The 2nd International Conference on Mechatronics and Automatic Control Systems</a>
Remote sensing	13-17 October, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">9th SPIE Asia-Pacific Remote Sensing Symposium</a>
Cell biology & Genetics	15-17 October, 2014	Shanghai	<a href="#">2014 International Experimental Biology and Medicine Conference</a>
Engineering	16-19 October, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">The 6th International Conference on Hydrometallurgy-ICHM2014</a>
Cancer research	9-11 November, 2014	Beijing	<a href="#">Cell Symposium - Hallmarks of Cancer: Asia</a>



## 8 Press Review\*

### 8.1 Policy & Papers

#### **Nature Publishing Index 2013: China To Overtake Japan In 1-2 Years**

Japan remains the Asian juggernaut in scientific output, but it may be overtaken by China within one or two years, according to the [Nature Publishing Index \(NPI\) 2013 Asia Pacific](#) published this week. Japan, which is overcoming the impacts of the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami with the help of a US\$1.8 billion science stimulus package, continues to lead the Asia-Pacific NPI in physics, life sciences and earth and environmental sciences. Despite the University of Tokyo being knocked off the top of the Asia-Pacific NPI institution rankings for the first time by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the institution is still the top contributor to *Nature*. China, which is ranked second on the Index, is outpacing Japan in scientific output, and may overtake Japan in Nature publications within one or two years. (Source: [Asian Scientist](#))

#### **Xi elaborates on nuclear security concept**

Chinese President Xi Jinping on 24 March told the 3rd Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) China's stance on nuclear security, in the first elaboration of China's nuclear security concept. The two-day NSS, which kicked off in The Hague on 24 March, aims to prevent nuclear terrorism. On the sidelines of the meeting, the crisis in [Ukraine](#) dominated, as US President Barack Obama tried to rally support for isolating Russia at his meeting with Xi and at the G7 meeting. During the summit attended by leaders from more than 50 countries and international organizations, the Chinese president was expected to explain China's stance on nuclear security and present ideas for international cooperation in the field. The president would also introduce China's achievements and plans in strengthening nuclear security, and discuss cooperation with global leaders. (Source: [Global Times](#))

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### **China and US drive patent filings to record**

China and the United States helped drive international patent filings to a record level last year, and cross-border applications surged to more than 200,000, the World Intellectual Property Organization said on 13 March. Innovation in engine technology was a leading factor behind patent activity. The flow of activity to register new patents is watched as an important indicator of how companies, countries, sectors and regions rank in terms of research and innovation, which are essential drivers of growth and strategic power. WIPO oversees the Patent Cooperation Treaty, which allows patent-seekers to file a single application to protect their invention, rather than having to lodge one in individual nations. A total of 205,300 PCT filings were registered in 2013, up 5.1 percent from the 194,400 filed a year earlier. (Source: [Shanghai Daily](#))

### **First China-India climate change study released**

"The China India Low Carbon Study," the first project of its kind, was launched on 17 March at an event in Beijing featuring top academics. The study examines the main factors in low carbon development -- financing, low carbon technologies and on-the-ground implementation. The report builds a case for exchange between China and India. It notes that developing nations are more likely to focus on innovation that contributes to local environmental benefits and to human development, and calls for more public sector funding for low carbon technologies. It also identifies several priority sectors and areas for technology cooperation between China and India, including clean coal incineration and power generation technologies, energy-saving technologies in the industrial, building and transportation sectors, wind power utilization, solar power utilization and carbon capture. (Source: [Xinhua](#))

### **China Releases 2014 Scientific Report**

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) has published its annual series of reports on the latest scientific findings and outlook, according to an announcement from the CAS on 17 March. This year's reports emphasized clean technologies and said the next ten years will be the most challenging time for resources and environment protection. The series noted the urgency of adopting an eco-friendly development path. The series is China's only annual overview report on science. It consists of three parts: a report on high-tech development, a report on science development, and a strategic report on China's sustainable growth. (Source: [CAS](#))



## 8.2 Voices & Opinions

### Premier tells firms to reward R&D staffs

Premier Li Keqiang urged companies to encourage innovation by giving their research and development staffs corporate shares. The premier said during a visit to Liaoning province on March 26 that high-tech research personnel deserve better material rewards, as the country is eager to unleash its innovation potential. Enterprises are obliged to transform intellectual property in the mind of researchers into tangible assets, he said. The premier made the remarks during a visit to Shenyang Yuanda Science and Technology Park in Liaoning's capital, Shenyang. (Source: [China Daily](#))

### Can China reverse the brain drain?

In the past decade, China appears to have been taking a strong position in the global brain race. Following the well-known 'Thousand Talents Program' which aims to lure expatriate and international talent, the Chinese government recently launched a 'Ten Thousand Talents Program'. But without overhauling the current research system and culture in China, it is not an easy task for initiatives such as the 'Thousand Talents Program' or 'Ten Thousand Talents Program' to accomplish their goals. (Source: [University World News](#))

## 8.3 Thematic Activities

### Health

#### AstraZeneca, Shenzhen Uni To Study Chronic Kidney Disease

AstraZeneca will collaborate with Shenzhen University Health Science Center to conduct pre-clinical research on chronic kidney disease, a large and growing unmet medical need in China. As a priority, the partners will focus on diabetic nephropathy, damage to the kidneys caused by diabetes, which, in severe cases, can lead to kidney failure. While not all diabetes patients have kidney damage, it is growing at an exponential rate in China. Between 2010 and 2025, the number of patients who experience kidney failure as a result of diabetic complications is expected to increase nearly 80 percent in China, to over 18 million patients. (Source: [Asian Scientist](#))



### **Liver Microsomes Immobilized Used to Investigate Metabolism of Whole Extract of *Rhizoma Coptidis***

Metabolic study is an important approach to understand the fate of a drug. Many successful in vivo and in vitro works have been carried out on occidental drugs which contain only one pure compound. Compared to the in vitro metabolic study on individual ingredient, the metabolism of the whole extracts of herbs is supposed to reflect more reality of the fate of TCMs. Recently, researchers in Chengdu Institute of Biology used a magnetic metabolic bioreactor to investigate the metabolism of the whole extract of a traditional Chinese medicinal plant, *Rhizoma coptidis*. This work developed a highly active magnetic bioreactor for metabolizing TCMs. The method established in this work has been proven to be a powerful tool for In vitro metabolic study of the whole extract of TCMs. (Source: [CAS](#))

### **Neurons Created In Vivo From Astrocytes**

Dr Su Zhida from the Second Military Medical University in Shanghai, along with collaborators at the University of Texas Southwestern (UTSW), has successfully turned scar-forming astrocytes in the spinal cords of adult mice into neurons. Spinal cord injuries can lead to an irreversible loss of neurons and scarring which ultimately leads to impaired motor and sensory functions. Stem cell transplants to replace neurons have been attempted, but expose patients to the risk of developing tumors. In this study, scientists have sought an alternative way to generate new neurons, by coaxing existing cells called astrocytes to turn into neurons. (Source: [Asian Scientist](#))

### **China Halves TB Prevalence In Just Twenty Years**

Over the last 20 years, China has more than halved its tuberculosis (TB) prevalence, with rates falling from 170 to 59 per 100,000 population. This success has been driven by a massive scale-up of the directly observed, short-course (DOTS) strategy, according to findings from a 20-year-long analysis of national survey data, published in *The Lancet*. According to the study, the marked improvements in TB treatment were driven by a major shift in treatment from hospitals to local public health centers implementing the DOTS strategy. China is a major contributor to the TB pandemic, with one million new TB cases every year, accounting for 11% of all new cases globally. (Source: [Asian Scientist](#))

\* \* \*



## Food, agriculture & fisheries, biotechnology

### China opens more maritime space for development

China has opened up more maritime space for development, charging enterprise and individual developers 10.8 billion yuan (1.7 billion U.S. dollars) last year, the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) said on 20 March. China streamlined the application and approval procedure for maritime space development last year, allowing the market to play a more active role in maritime resources allocation, said the administration. A report released by the SOA showed 21,500 hectares of sea reclamation were approved in 2013. The report also noted recreational use of maritime space made the largest increase in the share of fees, which surged from 2.87 percent in 2012 to 13.69 percent in 2013. (Source: [People's Daily](#))

### China looks to better supervise food, drug safety

China may set up a more "rigorous" supervision system covering food and drug safety this year, a senior police officer has said. Speaking at a press conference on 28 March, Hua Jingfeng, an official with the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), made the remarks without giving specifics, but said harsh punishments would be handed down to those who violate food and drug safety laws. Chinese media speculated that a food and drug safety police division could be established. (Source: [Shanghai Daily](#))

### Scientists Uncover Novel Negative Feedback Loop in Sugar-ABA Cascade in Plants

Sugars not only provide energy and carbon skeletons but also act as signaling molecules. In plants, sugar signaling is a central signaling system reflecting the physiological status and the environmental conditions. The extensively studied sugar signaling is HXK1-dependent glucose signaling, which stimulates the ABA signaling, thus forming a sugar-ABA signaling cascade. Researchers led by Dr. TENG Sheng in the Institute of Plant Physiology and Ecology, Shanghai Institutes for Biological Sciences cloned a novel QTL (Quantitative trait loci, stretches of DNA containing or linked to the genes that underlie a quantitative trait) for sugar sensing, which played an important role in the novel negative feedback regulation in the sugar-ABA cascade in plants. These findings bring a new insight into understanding the mechanism of the plant sugar signaling network. (Source: [CAS](#))

### GM cow a step closer to commercial pastures

A type of domestically grown genetically modified dairy cow resistant to an infection that lowers milk yield is expected to reach the market in five to eight years, according to a national legislator. The bacterial infection, mastitis, is widespread among dairy cattle. Sun Qixin, president of Northwest Agriculture



and Forestry University and a National People's Congress deputy, said the university has been researching a GM cow for seven years. "It's now being tested for its safety in human food products and in the environment," Sun said. Sun said the move is a definite future trend but it is important to ensure safety as well. He said China trails other countries in research and commercialization of GM animals. (Source: [China Daily](#))

### **China produces genetic map of Tibetan barley**

Chinese scientists said on 11 March that they have sequenced the entire genome of highland barley, an achievement that can help cultivate better breeds of Tibet's staple food and increase yield. The genome mapping project, which the scientists said has produced the world's first genetic map of highland barley, was launched in 2012 by researchers with Tibet's Academy of Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Sciences and BGI Tech Solutions in Shenzhen. A genome is the full complement of an organism's DNA. The size of an organism's genome is measured by the number of bases it contains -- base pairs being the building blocks of DNA. Highland barley, known in Tibetan as "ne," makes up 70 percent of all cereal crops in southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region. The barley is used to make tsamba, beer, flour, cakes and noodles. (Source: [China Daily](#))

### **Chinese researchers discover poisonous plant remedies**

Chinese scientists said on 24 March that they have "tamed" wild poisonous plants on the Tibetan plateau, an achievement that can help protect livestock and prevent desertification. Researchers with Tibet's Academy of Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Sciences have developed both drugs against the effects of locoweed, a common name for any plant that produces swainsonine, a phytotoxin harmful to livestock. Wang Baohai, a researcher with the Lhasa-based academy, said the remedies included therapeutic liquid for oral administration and preventive pills based on Western medicine and traditional Chinese medicine respectively. "According to clinical tests, the liquid can cure 95 percent of livestock poisoned by locoweed," said Wang Jinglong, another expert with the academy. "China has granted it a national patent." (Source: [Global Times](#))

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## **Information & communication technologies**

### **30 million more Chinese homes to have fiber optic connection**

China plans to put fiber optic connections into 30 million more homes nationwide in this year, according to Miao Wei, minister of industry of information technology. The move will bring the total number of users benefited



from the country's Fiber-To-The-Home program to nearly 200 million by the end of this year. The new broadband map includes 13,800 villages. Higher bandwidth -- 50 M to 100 M -- will come to regions with mature networks this year, while over 30 percent of total users will have 8M Internet access, he added. Most Chinese Internet surfers connect via 2M to 4M broadband, and government support has reduced the cost per M by 50.8 percent from that of 2011. The 4G network is also part of the plan, with 30 million new TD-LTE users and 300,000 new base stations expected this year. China's broadband strategy has been written into the government policy and highlights 4G mobile communications, fiber optic networks and Internet speed. (Source: [People's Daily](#))

### **Beijing court applies technology to save time**

A court in Beijing is applying digital technology, including quick response codes, to trial records, in an aim to save judicial resources and the time of litigants. Residents with lawsuits filed with the court in the capital's Yanqing district can now view their charge documents after scanning a quick response code on a smartphone, according to a statement issued by the court. In the past, litigants had to copy the documents by hand, which was a waste of time and paper, the court said. (Source: [China Daily](#))

### **Shanghai to hold top tech fair next month**

Iconic Tesla cars will shine at the China (Shanghai) Information Technology Fair between April 24 and 26, which is the China's only nation-level technology trade fair. Visitors are able to see the Tesla pure electric cars with racing body and ecological concept. But the specific models of Tesla cars coming to Shanghai haven't been decided, according to the organizers including the Ministry of Commerce and Shanghai government. Besides Tesla, latest technologies and products will be in the show on biotechnology, new materials, new energy, wearable device, intelligent manufacturing & next-generation IT and energy conservation and environmental protection. In 2013, the tech trade volume hit 746.9 billion yuan (US\$122.4 billion) in Shanghai, compared with 700 million yuan in 1987, according to the Science and Technology Commission of Shanghai Municipality. (Source: [Shanghai Daily](#))

### **China to Build its First Internet-themed Museum**

China will build its first Internet museum to chronicle the development of the net in the increasingly wired country, China's Internet network watchdog said on March 7. The museum will show the history and fruits of China's Internet development, with some of the exhibition open to the public in early April, according to China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), one of the major organizers. China now has over 600 million netizens with mobile Internet users expanding to 500 million. E-commerce and gaming are booming as informatization becomes key to updating the economy. (Source: [CAS](#))



### **What's WeChat's latest viral hit in China? Not games, not stickers – it's malignant tumor insurance**

Over a month after Tencent's WeChat scored a hit in China with a red envelope gifting feature, another promotion has gone viral on the messaging app. But while February's scheme marked the arrival of Chinese New Year, this one concerns a matter less festive – health insurance. According to Techweb, WeChat users in China have been participating in a gifting scheme known as "Wei Huzhu." Headed up by Beijing-based Taikang Life Insurance, the promotion lets users pay RMB 1 through WeChat Payments and receive one year of insurance protection worth RMB 1000 (about US\$ 162) if they're between 18 and 39 years old, or RMB 300 (about US\$ 48) if they're between 40 and 49 years old. (Source: [Tech in Asia](#))

### **Chinese consumers will be able to buy almost anything inside WeChat**

WeChat, the popular messaging app made by Tencent, is pushing even further into mobile commerce territory. On 5 March, Tencent added support for any brands to allow customers to purchase items or services inside the app. It works for both in-store payments (where retailers will likely scan a QR code generated by your order inside WeChat) or for purely online purchases that'll be delivered to you later. Now it's a case of waiting for retailers, ecommerce sites, and other companies to make use of it. Lots of big-name companies have WeChat service accounts – from McDonalds to Qunar, Starbucks to Xiaomi. (Source: [Tech in Asia](#))

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### **Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials & new production technologies**

#### **China Scientists Build New Camera to Help Discover Mystery Creatures of the Deep**

Scientists in Zhejiang province are developing a camera to capture images of rarely seen or undiscovered creatures living in the deepest oceans. The camera will be able to operate at a depth of about seven kilometres and is part of a series of research projects by mainland scientists to probe some of the least-explored areas on earth. A team at the Second Institute of Oceanography in Hangzhou is working on a camera that can take a series of three-dimensional images to build up a complete picture of sea creatures. (Source: [SCMP](#))



**Scientists demonstrate triboelectric generation in Beijing**

A scientist demonstrates triboelectric generation by rubbing gloves made from nylon and terylene materials at the Beijing Institute of Nanoenergy and Nanosystems under Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China, March 18, 2014. The institute showed their latest research results on triboelectric generators. The technology could convert random mechanical energy from our environment into electric energy. (Source: [People's Daily](#))

**Self-made drone tested in Xiangtan County, China's Hunan**

Zhang Aiguo, 62, a farmer from central China's Hunan province, has made 5 farming drones with his partners since 2013, which cost just less than 20,000 dollars for each one. The aircraft enthusiast made his specifically designed drones by inviting professionals to do the designs, buying imported engines online and ordering body frames from aircraft factories. Moreover, Zhang used lighter materials to save weight and improved the ignition mode for safe and convenience. Zhang is planning to produce 10 drones by this year, and to expand the output to 30 in 3 years, which could cover the demand of crops dust in the whole county. (Source: [People's Daily](#))

**Guangzhou to invest in robots**

More than 80 percent of manufacturing operations in Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province, will be using industrial robots and related "intelligent" technologies by 2020, according to official projections. The city's government has decided to expand investment in such technologies in the next few years, based on a report prepared by the Guangzhou commission of trade and economy. Yi Ming, deputy director of the commission, said China's robot and intelligent technologies industry has now entered a period of explosive growth. Industrial robots have been widely used in companies for assembly, welding, transportation and related processes in the Pearl River delta region. However, Yi said, more than 90 percent of the robots and core parts have to be imported from outside the mainland, a situation that he would like to see reversed, to meet the growing domestic demand. (Source: [China Daily](#))

**Scientists Twist Sound With Metamaterials**

A Chinese-U.S. research team is exploring the use of metamaterials – artificial materials engineered to have exotic properties not found in nature – to create devices that manipulate sound in versatile and unprecedented ways. In the journal *Applied Physics Letters* the team reports a simple design for a device, called an acoustic field rotator, which can twist wave fronts inside it so that they appear to be propagating from another direction. The team from Nanjing University hopes their acoustic rotator, with its ability to freely manipulate acoustic wavefronts, will improve the operation of devices like medical



ultrasound machines, which require the precise control of acoustic waves.  
(Source: [Asian Scientist](#))

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## Environment (including climate change)

### China mulls expanding tiger reserve

China is considering a plan to expand a major Siberian tiger reserve in the northeast and move out half of the local residents in order to better protect the rare species, an official said on 20 March. The Hunchun National Siberian Tiger Nature Reserve in Jilin Province will be increased by 524 hectares in areas if the proposed plan is adopted by the State Council, China's cabinet, said Lang Jianmin, director of the reserve's scientific research and publicity center. The State Forestry Administration has already approved the plan, which will see half of the 6,000 residents currently living in the reserve relocated, according to Lang. The remaining residents in the reserve will gradually move out of it along with the local urbanization process, he added. The move aims to reduce human disturbance to wild Siberian tigers as deforestation by locals, and their frog breeding businesses in the reserve affect the tigers' living environment, according to the official. (Source: [Xinhua](#))

### HASM Modification Improves Interpolating Precipitation Simulation in China

Spatially distributed estimations of precipitation are required as inputs to many environmental models. It is necessary to find methods to estimate precipitation in areas where precipitation has not been measured. As a high accuracy surface modeling method, HASM has been widely used in many areas. However, its performance in interpolating precipitation has not been satisfactory. In China, the monsoon system, together with the effects of topography, yields a remarkable change in annual total precipitation, from less than 25 mm in the northwest to more than 2,000 mm in the southeast, thus representing an increasing precipitation pattern from northwest to southeast over China. Based on the spatial distribution of precipitation in China, Dr. ZHAO Na and Prof. YUE Tianxiang from Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences gave a modification of HASM (HASM-PRE) to improve its simulation skills in interpolating precipitation. The proposed method can be used for calculating precipitation for other areas in other temporal scale by taking into account the different difference schemes for the respective area. (Source: [CAS](#))



### **Researchers Estimate Potential Evapotranspiration over the Past 50 years in the Arid Region of Northwest China**

Evapotranspiration is a key process in the Earth's surface hydrological cycle and energy balance. The temporal variation of evaporation is an important indicator of climate change and the response of water resource and eco-environment to such change. Since directly measuring evaporation is difficult, potential evapotranspiration ( $ET_0$ ) has been widely used in water resource studies and management practice. Based on the long-term meteorological data collected at 81 ground-based meteorological stations of the China Meteorological Administration during the period 1958–2010, LI Zhi et al. estimated the  $ET_0$  and analyzed the corresponding trend attribution in Northwestern arid region of China. They also investigated the relationship between  $ET_0$  and several climatic variables in the context of global climate change/ The analysis result showed that the  $ET_0$  has exhibited an obvious decreasing trend until the early 1990s. However, the downward trend has been reversed to an upward trend after then. (Source: [CAS](#))

### **Forecasting of fluctuating weather to be more challenging: HK Observatory**

Shun Chi-ming, director of the Hong Kong Observatory said 17 March that forecasting of fluctuating weather would inevitably become more challenging in the future. Shun said at a press briefing of the observatory that the outbreak of abnormal weather events around the world in recent years, such as severe flooding in the United Kingdom, record heat wave in Australia, snow storms in North America, was clear signs that the impact of climate changes was already being felt world widely, and that we would expect more." ([People's Daily](#))

### **Possible El Nino spring: China marine forecasting center**

China's National Marine Environmental Forecasting Center (NMEFC) said on 21 March that El Nino is likely to occur this spring. The NMEFC found that the temperature of the central and eastern tropical Pacific was neutral this spring, predicting it will turn warm in summer and is likely to develop an El Nino. El Nino is caused by interactions between the ocean and the atmosphere. It is characterized by unusually high ocean surface temperature in the central and eastern tropical Pacific. Chinese experts said the summer monsoon in East Asia this summer will be a little stronger than average, which will push western Pacific subtropical high northward and eastward. Two rain bands are likely to appear in this situation. (Source: [People's Daily](#))

### **Experts sign declaration aiming to protect Hainan Gibbon in China's Bo'ao**

Experts from over ten countries and several international organizations discuss the measures aiming to protect Hainan Gibbon during an international forum in Bo'ao, south China's Hainan Province, from March 18 to 20, 2014. Hainan



Gibbon, the rarest primate and one of the most endangered mammals in the world, remains only 23 at the tropical rainforest reserve in Hainan across the world. Hainan Gibbon, the rarest primate and one of the most endangered mammals in the world, remains only 23 at the tropical rainforest reserve in Hainan across the world. (Source: [Xinhua](#))

### **Tibet records rising temperatures and extreme weather**

Global warming has reached the snow-capped Himalayas in south China's Tibet, with rising temperatures and more extreme weather, according to an official climate report. The report on climate change and environmental monitoring in Tibet was published by Tibet Climate Center this week. The report is based on analysis of climate data collected between 1961 and 2013, showing that the average temperature in Tibet has been rising by 0.31 degrees Celsius every decade. Tibet is the highest region in the mid-latitude regions, and seen as a barometer of global warming. There is also a trend of more severe extreme weather. (Source: [Xinhua](#))

### **Tiger, leopard populations recovering in NE China**

The latest field survey of wild Siberian tigers and leopards in northeast China has shown the populations recovering. The survey was carried out over a year by the Cat Research Center with the State Forestry Bureau, in cooperation up with World Wildlife Fund, and forestry authorities in Heilongjiang and Jilin provinces, said Jiang Guangshun, deputy head of the center, on 23 March. Jiang said that from the survey, researchers estimate that there were over 30 tigers and leopards in the mountain regions. Siberian tigers, also known as Amur or Manchurian tigers, mainly live in east Russia, northeast China and northern parts of the Korean Peninsula. Less than 500 Siberian tigers are believed to survive in the wild, with an estimated 18 to 22 in Heilongjiang and Jilin. (Source: [Xinhua](#))

### **Five New Species of Armored Spiders Discovered in Chinese Caves**

If you're afraid of spiders, there may be no worse place to encounter one than in the dark, slimy confines of the limestone caves of Southeast China. But that's where several Chinese scientists recently discovered five new spider species. All of the newly discovered cave-dwelling species belong to a broader family of armored spiders, or the Tetrablemmidae family, distinguished by their layered abdominal patterns, which resembles body armor. The spiders were discovered by a group of researchers at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Led by Shuqiang Li, a zoology professor at the academy, the researchers have ventured into more than 2,000 caves. And in the last decade, Li and his colleagues have collected more than 2,000 new species of spiders. They're batting a thousand, as they say. The bio-rich caves where Li found the spiders are part of the South China Karst, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that spans Guangxi, Guizhou, and Yunnan provinces. (Source: [CAS](#))



### **Seizures Show Scale of Pangolin Peril**

Pangolins, insect-eating mammals that live in tropical parts of Africa and Asia, are under threat from a growing inter-continental illegal trade in the animals and their scales, according to a new report. Whilst poaching of large animals such as elephants and rhinos and the illegal trade in ivory and horn receives widespread attention (in 2012 35,000 elephants were slaughtered for their ivory and 810 rhinos for their horns) the trade in smaller and more common species is often overlooked. A team from Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), working in collaboration with the Chinese Public Security Bureau and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, has produced the first report on the most heavily-trafficked CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) protected mammal, the pangolin. Each pangolin can yield 500g of scales, which are prized in traditional Chinese medicine, retailing at up to \$350, so this illegal trade is lucrative and supports a significant criminal community. (Source: [Oxford Science Blog](#))

### **The MIS 3 Glacial Advances in the Nyainqentanglha and Possible Linkage to the North Atlantic Cooling**

Chronologies of glacial advances during the last glacial period are not contemporaneous throughout the Tibetan Plateau. Professor YI Chaolu and his research group from the Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, dated glacial boulders on moraines from the last glacial period in the Nyainqentanglha Mountains, Tibet. They suggested that glacial advances that occurred during a relatively warm period (MIS 3) between two cold stages of the last glacial episode in the Nyainqentanglha may correlate with millennial-scale climate change (Heinrich) events. (Source: [CAS](#))

### **Color Changes In Clay Indicate Soil Stability**

A new study shows that interactions with the atmosphere impact the structural stability of soil, which in turn can have serious implications on engineering and construction. Scientists from the Chinese Academy of Sciences investigated the mechanisms driving change in the characteristics of clay under ambient temperature and pressure. Specifically, they studied the color changes of Zhanjiang clay, which changes from grayish green to yellowish brown when exposed to the atmosphere. They found that the changes were driven by a reaction of oxides of iron in the clay. The oxidation of the iron oxides reduced the plasticity, sensitivity and structural yield stress of soil. (Source: [CAS](#))

### **Scientists search for clear answers on smog**

Among the world's best-known mega-cities, Beijing and Shanghai must be the only ones where house prices are still climbing rapidly, despite severe air



pollution that will take years to solve. But for people unhappy at becoming human vacuum cleaners in a polluted metropolis, and who are equally unwilling to forgo an urban lifestyle, which is the better choice - the capital city in the north, or the southern international trade center at the end of the Yangtze River? The smog, covering 1.43 million square kilometers mainly in northern China, prompted the Beijing government to issue an orange alert - the second-highest warning - and urge people not to leave their homes. (Source: [China Daily](#))

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## Energy

### China working on uranium-free nuclear plants in attempt to combat smog

[China](#) is developing a new design of [nuclear power](#) plant in an attempt to reduce its reliance on [coal](#) and to cut air [pollution](#). In an effort to reduce the number of coal-fired plants, the Chinese government has brought forward by 15 years the deadline to develop a nuclear power plant using the radioactive element thorium instead of uranium. A team of researchers in Shanghai has now been told it has 10 instead of 25 years to develop the world's first such plant. (Source: [The Guardian](#))

### Li pushes for more work on saving energy

Premier Li Keqiang urged further work on saving energy and reducing emissions, according to an official statement released 23 March. Li said the environmental work and economic expansion shall be coordinated because reducing production capacity creates huge business potential for new, green industries. China will control total energy consumption efficiently while optimizing the industrial structure with smart power grids and clean energy like wind power, nuclear power, hydropower and photovoltaic power generation, Li said. "We will strengthen energy conservation and emissions reduction and impose a ceiling on total energy consumption. This year, we aim to cut energy intensity by more than 3.9 percent," Li said in the report. To hit the target, the market mechanism must promote energy saving and cleaner air, while demanding stricter punishment for illegal emissions and evading supervision. (Source: [Shanghai Daily](#))

### China to test deep continental driller

China's highly automated deep continental scientific drilling set has been deployed for the first time in the country's largest but fast-depleting oilfield in Daqing, Heilongjiang Province, for tapping deep stratum oil reserves. Developed under the Sinoprobe Program, a government-funded earth science



program for exploring the composition, structure and evolution of the continental lithosphere, the equipment is designed to reach a depth of 10,000 meters. Daqing Oilfield, the largest oilfield explored by China's major oil and gas producer PetroChina, produced slightly over 40 million tonnes of crude oil in 2013, marking the 11th consecutive year in which the crude oil output of Daqing Oilfield exceeded 40 million tonnes. Chen Xuanhua, head of the Sinoprobe Exploration Program with the Chinese Academy of Geological Sciences, said the new technology is likely to lead to discovery of a "new Daqing Oilfield" underneath the current one. (Source: [People's Daily](#))

### **China confident of its nuclear safety**

China has kept improving nuclear security and the safety of its nuclear power plants can be assured, the National Nuclear Safety Administration (NNSA) said on 11 March, which marks the third anniversary of Japan's nuclear meltdown in 2011. Like other countries, China has stepped up nuclear checks since the Fukushima crisis to avoid similar accidents. In the past three years, more than 300 specialists have overhauled nuclear power plants and assessed their security situations. The results of the assessment indicate that China's nuclear power plants are safe, but work still needs to be done in responding to and handling extreme natural events like Fukushima. China has 17 nuclear power stations in operation with a total installed capacity of 14.8 million kilowatts. A further 28 units are under construction. (Source: [China Daily](#))

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### **Transport (including aeronautics)**

#### **Knowledge Representation, Feature Selection and Fault Classification Method Proposed for Newly Assembled Transmission**

Transmission as a main component of a modern automobile has a significant impact on vehicle performance, its technical parameters and working conditions is an important indicator to evaluate the automobile performance. Fault detection of newly assembled automobile transmission is a more challenging research work than fault detection of the transmission used for a long time. To handle this issue, researchers from Shenyang Institute of Automation (SIA) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences proposed a knowledge representation, feature selection and fault classification method based on GA-BP learning algorithm for newly assembled transmission. Compared with traditional manual experiential inspection method, the system is efficient and stable. Specific part fault location provides valuable guidance for repair. (Source: [CAS](#))





### China Expects to Launch Cargo Ship into Space Around 2016

China is expected to launch a cargo ship into space around 2016 to serve the Tiangong-2 space laboratory, a leading space scientist said on 2 March. The cargo ship, named "Tianzhou" or "Heavenly Vessel" in Chinese, will be delivered by the newly-developed Long March-7 carrier rocket and dock with Tiangong-2 automatically, said Zhou Jianping, chief designer of China's manned space program, in an exclusive interview with Xinhua. Cargo transportation system that supplies goods and propellants is a key technology China must master to build its own space station, said Zhou, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the country's top political advisory body. (Source: [CAS](#))

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### Socioeconomic sciences & the humanities, archaeology & paleontology

#### Bizarre Bovid Species Found from the Late Miocene of Linxia Basin, China

Numerous Neogene mammal fossils have been excavated in Hezheng area, Gansu province since the 1970s. Two fossil skulls of a bizarre bovid were discovered in recent years. Dr. SHI Qinqin, Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, described them as a new species, *Tsaidamotherium brevirostrum*. *Tsaidamotherium* is a mid-sized late Miocene bovid with an odd-looking horn-core apparatus so far known only from northwestern China. The new species differs from the type species, *T. bohlini*, mainly in horn-core morphology. Although the fossil material of *Tsaidamotherium* is extremely scarce, its distribution area might be a long strip along the north margin of the Tibetan plateau, since the localities of the two species are almost 600 km apart from each other. The distribution of this kind of animal may even extend to Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. (Source: [CAS](#))

#### Scientists and looters vie for treasure

After a descent of 16 meters into waters off the coast of Fujian province, Zhao Jiabin touched the sandy seabed. The turbid water meant the maritime archaeologist's vision was restricted to just 1 meter. Apart from a group of curious shrimps attracted by the beam of his flashlight, Zhao saw nothing until a blurred reflection on the seabed caught his eye. About 300 years ago, the porcelain ware - bowls, plates and jars decorated with delicate blue and white patterns - were en route to Europe, before the ship sank and became a hidden museum. But now the porcelain had been looted, Zhao says. Professional archaeology and commercial salvage are irreconcilable. Outright looters are systematically scouring the best of the wrecks in search of gold and other booty.



The researchers are competing with looters for the best wrecks, says Zhang Wei, a maritime archaeologist and deputy director of the National Museum of China. But with their limited resources and public attention, the archaeologists are falling behind in the race. (Source: [China Daily](#))

### **Owner of 1500-year-old coffin identified as woman**

A 1500-year-old coffin excavated from grassland in Xilingol League was opened in Xilinhot, north China's Inner Mongolia on March 8. The coffin could date back to Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534). Archaeological work is now still under way. So far, the tomb's owner has been identified as a woman but her ethnic group, age and diet habit are not confirmed yet.

### **Ancient palace ruins unearthed in central China**

The ruins of an ancient Chinese imperial palace have been unearthed in central China's Henan Province, local archaeologists have said. Chinese archaeologists have discovered a well-preserved large burial complex dating back to the Shang and Zhou Dynasties (1600B.C.-256 B.C.) at Dashahe Wetland in Jiaozuo City, Central China's Henan province. They said the Taiji Palace complex covers 6,000 square meters and dates back to 1,700 years ago. It was the center of the ancient capital city of Luoyang in the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) and the Wei State during the Three Kingdoms period (220-280). Liu Tao, a research with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said the palace marked a new era in the construction of ancient Chinese capital cities. (Source: [Global Times](#))

### **Chinese, German scientists discover world's oldest cheese in NW China**

Yang Yiming, an associate professor with the University of Chinese Academy of Science shows the sample of the cheese dating back 3600 years. The cheese was found among the funeral objects in an ancient tomb in Tarim Basin in northwest China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region. It was identified as the oldest cheese found in the world. The scientific periodical "Nature" has published the news in its latest issue. (Source: [Global Times](#))

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## **Space**

### **Head of China's space science reaches out**

As a rising space power, China is placing increased emphasis on basic research. Last week, scientists from the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) gathered in Chengdu to plan their first



joint scientific space mission. Wu Ji, director-general of CAS's National Space Science Center in Beijing and a co-chair of the meeting, talked about China's space ambition, the importance of international collaboration and why a space race between China and the United States is unlikely. The interview is available online. (Source: [Nature](#))

### **China has no lunar base project: leading scientist**

The world's third country to soft-land on the moon has no plan to build a lunar base there, a leading scientist of China's lunar probe mission told Xinhua on 1 March. But Ye Peijian, chief scientist of the Chang'e-3 program, also said that since man can land on the moon and stay there briefly, there will be the day when they can stay there for long time. "From the rule of science and moon probe technology development, a place for long-term residence (on the moon) will be built eventually," added the scientist, who is also a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), China's top political advisory body. Chang'e-3 is part of the second phase of China's lunar program, which includes orbiting, landing and returning to Earth. The country has also sent probes to orbit the moon in 2007 and 2010. (Source: [Xinhua](#))

### **'Gravity' inspires Chinese space scientists**

A Chinese spaceship plays a key part in Dr. Ryan Stone's thrilling journey back to Earth in the Oscar-winning film "Gravity." In real life, the chief designer of China's spaceships found the film more than merely entertaining; it was "very inspiring." Zhang Bonan, chief designer of the country's spaceship program, told Xinhua on 6 March that he had a professional interest in the movie. As a national legislator, he is in Beijing attending the ongoing annual parliamentary session, and was happy to discuss how "Gravity" both reflects and affects his work in the week in which it won seven Oscars, including the heavyweight Best Director award. "I am glad a foreign film portrays China's space program," he said. "It is a good promotion of us. ([China Daily](#))

### **China's lunar rover awake but ailing**

China's moon rover Yutu woke up again at 6:42 a.m. on 14 March, after its third dormancy, but even after a long rest, mechanical problems have not been resolved. Yutu and the lander, which woke up earlier on 12 March, have restarted their operations and are exploring as scheduled, according to the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence (SASTIND). The control issues that have troubled Yutu since January remain, but its panorama camera, radar and other equipment are functioning normally, SASTIND said. The cause of the problems is a mystery. (Source: [Xinhua](#))



### **China's space exploration goals before 2020**

Aboard the space station, deep in space, researchers will probe the profound mysteries of the universe, while explorers penetrate the darkness beyond both Moon and Mars. This is no sci-fi movie, but a vision of the future presented to the people's congress and members of the CPPCC during the two sessions. The vision is of a "space odyssey" for China's future and for space exploration. By the year of 2020, the International Space Station is expected to be retired, while, in that same year, China's space station should be complete. China's station may then be mankind's only foothold in space. (Source: [China Daily](#))

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### **People & Higher Education**

#### **USTC Keeps First Among NPI Ranking of Chinese Universities**

The University of Science and Technology of China (USTC) has dominated the NPI (Nature Publishing Index) ranking of Chinese universities for the third consecutive years, according to the editors of the NPI 2013 Asia-Pacific published on March 27th. USTC ranks only second to the Chinese Academy of Science (CAS) among domestic institutes, 9th in Asia-Pacific area and 57th in globe top 100 (16 places higher than last year). It is reported that 37 academic papers from USTC were published in Nature in 2013, and the NPI is 15.91, with physics and chemistry holding significant advantages. According to the ranking, the top 10 Chinese research institutes are CAS, USTC, Tsinghua University, Peking University, Genomics Company BGI, Nanjing University, Fudan University, Zhejiang University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the University of Hong Kong. (Source: [CAS](#))

#### **University 'bridges' US-China gap**

As scholars and academics continue efforts to encourage the study of China, Pace University, in New York City's Lower Manhattan, is trying an alternative tack to promote its students' interests in the world's second-largest economy — by subsidizing a chance to study abroad. The Annual Chinese Bridge Eastern USA Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students offers participants from a number of schools the opportunity to study in China, provided their knowledge of the Chinese language and culture stands out. The event at Pace, set for March 30, is part of the 13th annual international Chinese Bridge Chinese Proficiency Competition coordinated by Hanban, an organization dedicated to spreading knowledge of Chinese language and culture. (Source: [China Daily](#))



### **Beijing youth science competition to be held in Fangshan**

The 34th Beijing Youth Science Creation Competition will be held from March 27 to 30 in Fangshan district, Beijing. Organized by the Beijing Association for Science and Technology, the annual competition has become a platform to demonstrate science and technology practices and innovations ranging from robots to environmental pollution research from elementary and middle school students in Beijing. Beijing Technology and Business University will host the event. During the event, scientists will be invited to give speeches and teaching seminars to students. Around 300,000 students from Beijing have participated in this year's preliminary contest. Students have submitted 1,885 pieces of science work, and 196 candidates will compete for "The Mayor's Awards", which will be awarded to the 10 best pieces. (Source: [China Daily](#))

### **UCAS to Recruit First Undergraduate Students**

A total of 300 students from 10 provinces and cities in China will be the first undergraduates to enter the University of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (UCAS), when they enroll this fall, the academy said in Beijing. Six majors will be open to the new undergraduate students, including mathematics and applied mathematics, physics, chemistry, biological science, computer science and technology, and materials science and engineering. UCAS currently educates about 41,000 master's and Ph.D. students using a "two-phase" training mode whereby students take core courses at UCAS's Beijing campuses and undertake scientific research at Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) institutes. (Source: [CAS](#))

### **Doubts raised over the rapid academic rise of the 'Mayor of Tea'**

Doubts have been cast over the rapid academic rise of a former top government official from Yunnan who is under investigation for corruption, according to a media report. Questions have been raised over how Shen Peiping, the province's former deputy governor, was able to secure a doctorate from a university in Beijing without first apparently getting a master's degree. He was then made a professor at the college within five months, breaching regulations on the years of experience needed before taking up a senior academic role, the report said. Shen was a professor until last year at the resources, economics and policy research centre founded by Beijing Normal University and the city government in Puer. The centre had funded 10 million yuan (HK\$12.6 million) of research and raised 1.6 million yuan in scholarships by June 2012. (Source: [SCMP](#))

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## Research infrastructures

### China to Build a Huge Underground Neutrino Experiment

Work has started on a huge underground neutrino lab in China. The \$330m Jiangmen Underground Neutrino Observatory (JUNO) is being built in Kaiping City, Guangdong Province, in the south of the country around 150 km west of Hong Kong. When complete in 2020, JUNO is expected to run for more than 20 years, studying the relationship between the three types of neutrino: electron, muon and tau. The design concept for the detector was completed last year and it will be built by the Institute of High Energy Physics (IHEP), which is part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). JUNO will require an 80 m high and 50 m diameter experimental hall located 700 m underground. (Source: [Physics World](#))

### New ship joins China's oceanic scientific expedition

Scientific expedition vessel "Xiangyanghong 10" on 28 March officially joined China's oceanic research team. Construction of the 4,500-tonne ship took from June 2012 to this January and was implemented by the Second Institute of Oceanography under the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) and the Zhejiang Taihe Shipping Co., Ltd.. This is the first scientific expedition vessel jointly built by a government-sponsored institution and a private company, said an SOA statement. (Source: [China Daily](#))

### President Appointed For New Monash-Suzhou Research Institute

Professor Yu Aibing has been appointed as Pro Vice-Chancellor and President of the new Monash University-Southeast University (SEU) Joint Research Institute in Suzhou, China. Monash is the only Australian university to be granted a license to operate in China, one of the world's largest and fastest-growing economies. The establishment of the Monash University-Southeast University Joint Research Institute will complement the Joint Graduate School (Suzhou), which officially opened in October 2013. (Source: [Asian Scientist](#))

### Bayer to build plant to tap need

German chemicals maker Bayer said that it will build a new coating raw material HDI plant in Shanghai to meet demand from automakers to footwear producers. The new 50,000-ton-per-year hexamethylene diisocyanate (HDI) plant will add to Bayer's existing factory producing 30,000 tons annually at its manufacturing site in the Shanghai Chemical Industry Park, which boasts one of the largest HDI capacities worldwide by 2016. "We simply need the volume," said Daniel Meyer, head of the coatings, adhesives and specialties unit under Bayer MaterialScience, citing strong demand from China's automobile, textile, construction and consumer electronics industries. (Source: [Shanghai Daily](#))



### **ASIPP-made Antennas To Heat German ASDEX-U Tokamak**

At the Institute of Plasma Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences (ASIPP), a second ICRF heating antenna is packed and ready to be delivered to the ASDEX Upgrade Tokamak in Germany after passing acceptance test late February. The ICRF antenna--for Ion Cyclotron Range of Frequencies (ICRF)--was examined and accepted by a three-member team from the Max Planck Institute of Plasma Physics (IPP) headed by Helmut Fuenfgelder during a visit from February 25 to 27. (Source: [CAS](#))

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### **International S&T relations**

#### **Global Partnership To Fight Infectious Disease Launched**

A global partnership has been launched to accelerate progress toward a world safe and secure from the threat of infectious disease. The agreement, signed last month, will initially include 26 countries, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). Countries that have committed to meeting the Global Health Security goals include Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Vietnam. (Source: [Asian Scientist](#))

#### **NSFC Vice President Meets with DFG Vice President and Deputy Secretary General**

On February 21, 2014, Prof. Liu Congqiang, Vice President of NSFC met with Prof. Michael Famulok, Vice President of DFG and Dr. Harald von Kalm, Deputy Secretary General of DFG. The two sides made an in-depth discussion on ways to push forward the cooperation between the two organizations. (Source: [NSFC](#))

#### **Ontario expects more tie-ups with China**

The Canadian province of Ontario expects more research and innovation partnerships with China as part of efforts to strengthen its economy. During a just-concluded weeklong trip to China, Reza Moridi, Ontario's minister of research and innovation, focused on collaboration opportunities in life sciences, information technology and clean technology. A memorandum of understanding between Ontario and China's Ministry of Science and Technology covered 12 collaboration projects between the province and Chinese research institutions and industry. Also unveiled was a commitment of an extra C\$10 million





(US\$8.89 million) in joint Ontario-China funding to support the next round of collaboration projects under the MOU. (Source: [Shanghai Daily](#))

### **China and India low carbon pursuits central to south-south cooperation**

"While economic capabilities and institutional systems vary between the two, coordinated knowledge driven processes between China and India will be instrumental in moving both towards global sustainability goals." Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, Chair of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), said at an event which also featured a discussion of a groundbreaking report between China and India on low carbon collaboration on 17 March. The two countries also face similar mitigation pressures and this suggests the possibility and priority of cooperation between the two countries. Huang Wenhang, director of the Division of International Cooperation of the National Development and Reform Commission of China, said, "The collaborative study between China and India on low-carbon development has set a good example for south-south cooperation. With our joint efforts, we will achieve our goals on low-carbon development. (Source: [People's Daily](#))

### **China, Uzbekistan Step up Efforts in Astronomical Observation**

China's national astronomical observatories and Ulugh Beg Astronomical Institute from Uzbekistan agreed to step up cooperation. Cooperation will be carried out in equipment upgrades, frontier research and historical study in astronomical observation and staff training, said Yan Jun, director of the National Astronomical Observatories, Chinese Academy of Sciences, at the signing ceremony for a memorandum of understanding. Last September, Xi Jinping visited Ulugh Beg Observatory in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Xi and Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov agreed that scientists of the two countries should carry out cooperation in astronomical study. (Source: [CAS](#))

### **China gathers high-tech surveillance data on islands**

China has collected detailed topographic information and images of all its islands using aerial remote sensing, a method allowing the capture of data about objects from a distance. The completion of the project marks the country's first "systematic and comprehensive" move to collect surveillance information on the more than 10,500 islands within its territory, said the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) on March 7. It took three years of work by the aviation law enforcement forces with the China Marine Surveillance (CMS), according to an SOA statement. The administration said that the landmasses covered are on the official catalogue of China's islands, but none fall within the country's recently established Air Defense Identification Zone. (Source: [China Daily](#))

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